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In the Bookman Office

Contributors to this Issue

A previous poem by CHARLES NORMAN, "Dead Men Under Buildings", appeared in the February number of THE BOOKMAN. Mr. Norman, who is twenty-four years old, is living in New York after two years in Paris. His poems have appeared in a number of magazines here and abroad. He is also represented in several recent anthologies of verse, including the "Anthologie de la Nouvelle Poesie Américaine".

* * *

EDWARD GOLDBECK was born in Berlin and educated at the university there. He was an officer in the Prussian army for seven years, coming to this country in 1911. In addition to writing a number of books in German, he has written widely for the press of this country, and has been a regular contributor of special articles to the Chicago Tribune. THE BOOKMAN will shortly publish a study of Thomas Mann from him.

* * *

VIÑA DELMAR is a young woman who tried her hand at short stories not very long ago and found herself an immediate success. Up to that time she had been almost constantly travelling, with no thought of attempting fiction, in the company of her parents who are actors. This spring appeared her first novel, "Bad Girl". It was widely acclaimed by both critics and the reading public—with the further distinction of being banned in Boston. At present Miss Delmar is living on the coast of New Jersey writing more short stories. She has not yet begun a second novel.

* * *

While still under twenty REBECCA WEST made herself known as one of the most brilliant women of her time by her reviewing and political writing in *The Free Woman* and *The Clarion*. Since then she has contributed many papers on literary, political, and general subjects to English and American magazines. She was born in Ireland and educated in Edinborough. Her first book was a study of Henry James. In 1918 her moving war story "The Return of the Soldier" revealed to many readers a distinguished gift for fiction. This was confirmed four years later by her powerful full-length novel "The Judge". Another novel is promised for autumn publication.

* * *

VALENTINE WILLIAMS, author of "The Yellow Streak" and other books, wrote his first novel "The Man With the Clubfoot", a romance of the Secret Service, when he was convalescing from wounds received in the battle of the Somme. As a newspaper-man and war-correspondent he has seen a good deal of the adventurous side of life in such exciting passages as the revolution in Portugal, the Balkan wars, and the Great War. War-corresponding with him is a hereditary affair, for his father, the late Chief Editor of Reuter's, represented the famous British news-agency with the French in the Franco-Prussian War.

* * *

MARCUS GOODRICH was born in San Antonio, Texas. He served on the border in the National Guard, and in the expectation that the United States would enter the war joined the navy. When his destroyer was sunk off Gibraltar he shifted to naval aviation. After the war he attended Columbia University for a while, and then entered reporting. This led to dramatic criticism for the New York *Tribune* and *Theatre Magazine*, in this country and in Europe. He is now engaged on a novel of the sea.

* * *

The article in this issue by JOHN MACY, "The Victorious Victorians", is the first of a series in which Mr. Macy will present the modern approach to the chief figures of the epoch of Queen Victoria. A paper on Carlyle will be published in a forthcoming issue, followed by one on Dickens.

* * *

JOHN COURNOS first attracted attention with his trilogy of novels, "The Mask", "The Wall", and "Babel". His most recent novel was "O'Flaherty the Great". Next season

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he will publish a book of biographical studies under the title "The New Plutarch". Mr. Cournos is living at Geneva, Switzerland, with his wife Sylvia Norton, author of "The Winthrops".

* * *

More widely known for her poetry, GENEVIEVE TAGGARD has from time to time, chiefly in THE BOOKMAN, published prose sketches and stories similar to the one in this issue. The title of Miss Taggard's approaching book of poetry has been changed from "B. C." to "Travelling Standing Still".

* * *

try in 1907 and a year later began newspaper story award this month, was born in northern Ireland in 1886. He came to this country in 1907 and a year later began newspaper work on the Philadelphia *North American*. Since then he has been on the staffs of the New York *Journal*, the Houston *Post*, the Dallas *News*, and the Baltimore *Sun*, for which paper he is at present covering the United States Senate.

Mr. Douglas served as a soldier in South Africa (at the end of the Boer War), in West Africa (1905 campaign), in Egypt, and in the World War. He holds with four other living men the distinction of winning a commission from the ranks in both the British and the United States regular armies. Between military service and newspaper work Mr. Douglas spent two periods in the moving-picture business—one as editor of the Pathe Weekly, now the Pathe News, the reel of topical events released by that company. Subsequently he had charge of production for the same company for two years.

Mr. Douglas writes us that the announcement of his winning the prize gives him "more pleasure than the sale of half a dozen magazine stories".

* * *

The book by Norman Douglas "Birds and Beasts of the Greek Anthology" which EDWARD MCDONALD mentions in his review of "In the Beginning" has not been published in this country but may be obtained from the London firm of Chapman and Hall at seven shillings sixpence.

* * *

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WALLACE THURMAN was formerly the editor of *Fire*, the magazine devoted to the younger negro writers and artists. He has contributed articles to *The New Republic*, *The World Tomorrow* and other periodicals, chiefly on aspects of negro culture. Next autumn his play "Black Belt" will be produced by Crosby Gaige and Al Lewis. At present Mr. Thurman is working on his first novel.

* * *

MONTGOMERY EVANS has actively participated in the kind of work of which he writes in "Movies and the Highbrows". He was instrumental in getting a viewing in this country of the first films from Russia and, more recently, from Japan. He has cooperated in the work of the Fifth Avenue Playhouse, nationally celebrated for its pioneer work in building up a moving picture audience of taste and intelligence.

* * *

Since coming to New York from Toledo a few years ago—by way of the University of Wisconsin—MARGARET WHIPPLE has been engaged in publishing and editorial work, besides contributing to periodicals.

About "Boston"

A "contemporary historical novel" is an unusual art-form, and may call for explanation. So far as concerns the two individuals, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, this book is not fiction, but an effort at history; everything they are represented as doing they actually did, and their words have been taken from their letters, or from the dictation of friends and enemies. Likewise these friends and enemies appear in their own persons and under their own names.

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The author, W. Francklyn Paris, M.A., L.H.D., is a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor and one of the founders of the American Society; a member of many distinguished societies of art and letters, and a much sought-after contributor to architectural and art magazines on both sides of the Atlantic.

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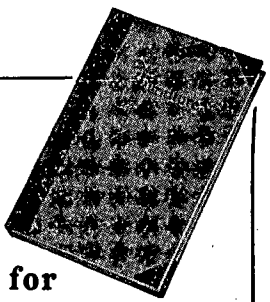

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have his feelings hurt. There is one simple rule for guidance in reading the novel: the characters, who are real persons bear real names, while those who bear imaginary names are imaginary.

The writer has been visiting Boston off and on for twenty-five years. The first visits had to do with the novel "Manassas", and involved meetings with the city's old-time heroes, such as Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Frank B. Sanborn, Julia Ward Howe. The later visits, having to do with "The Brass Check", "The Goose-step" and "Oil!", involved a change of view-point not without its interest to students of our history. Nevertheless, it should be said at the outset that what is great in Boston will find its due recognition in this story. Those who have made the city's glory have never been its rulers, but always a "saving minority", and that minority is there today, and it is active.

The task has not been approached in a spirit of grudge; on the contrary, the writer regards with a mixture of gratitude and amusement those Boston officials who provided for "Oil!" an advertisement which went around the world several times. To them he owes the fact that he is almost out of debt to his printer, for the first time in twenty-five years as publisher of his own writings. An honest effort will here be made to portray a complex community exactly as it is. The story has no hero but the truth, and its heroines are two women, one old and the other young, who are ardently seeking the truth.

Summary of the previous instalments:

Cornelia Thornwell, wife of a former governor of Massachusetts, a widow at the age of sixty, after forty years of sheltered ease feels free to do what she wants, regardless of her conventional family. She begins life anew at Plymouth as a working woman, and while boarding with an Italian family meets Bartolomeo Vanzetti, who talks to her of his ideas. He has a taste for poetry and is idealistic and revolutionary in social questions.

When Cornelia has been in Plymouth a year she is recognized by her grand-daughter, Betty Alvin, who absorbs some of Vanzetti's

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ideas. On returning home she shocks her parents. Cornelia's refuge is discovered. When America enters the World War, Cornelia and Betty align themselves with the pacifists, and Betty, coming from Radcliffe to live with Cornelia, is included in the government surveillance of pacifists. After the Armistice, Betty and Cornelia are arrested for participating in a suffragist parade. Vanzetti, who has lived in Mexico during the war to avoid military duty, returns to Plymouth. Betty is sent abroad by her parents with a cousin, but, once in Hungary, Betty goes to work.

When Betty's Red sympathies are discovered by her employers, she leaves for Italy, where Cornelia, at the urgent request of the Alvins, joins her, finding her under the protection of a French communist writer and a young American investigator. While Cornelia and Betty are abroad, news reaches them of the arrest of Sacco and Vanzetti for alleged participation in a hold-up and double murder at South Braintree.

On the afternoon of April fifteenth the paymaster of a shoe company took the week's pay-money, about $16,000, and accompanied by a guard started to carry it from the office to the factory, some two blocks distant. While passing another factory two foreign-looking men who had been lounging by the railing suddenly drew guns and opened fire. One victim died at once, while the other died the next day. The murderers picked up the cash box, and at the same instant an automobile came rushing up the street, slowed down, and the two bandits sprang in and drove away, shooting at bystanders as they went. Investigators, in interviewing witnesses, found that there was considerable disagreement as to the essential details.

At the same time, Coacci, an Italian anarchist sentenced for deportation, is being sought by Federal authorities for jumping bail. The immigration officer, in company with the Chief of Police of Bridgewater, a town which had likewise suffered from bandit raids, finds Coacci at his home. Stewart, the chief of police, is suspicious of Coacci's desire to be sent away at once, but when he returns with another officer he discovers that Coacci has already been deported. But a man named Boda is found at the house, and is likewise viewed with suspicion, but when his arrest in connection with the murders is decided on, he, too, has fled. Through a trap he is caught, in company with Sacco and Vanzetti. These two refuse to clear themselves, for fear other innocent men will be involved.

Cornelia and Betty hurry home from Italy to aid Sacco and Vanzetti.

The Sacco-Vanzetti case begins to present a muddled aspect through the conflicting reports of witnesses. Lee Swenson, a famous liberal lawyer, decides to take the defense. About this time Betty announces to Cornelia that she and Joe Randall—the young American investigator who has followed her from Italy to assist in the trial—have "married themselves".

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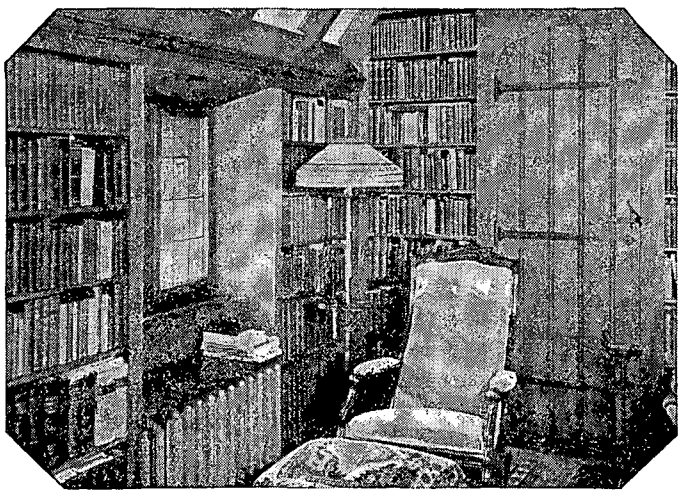

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JULY, 1928 VOLUME LXVII, NO. 5

The BOOKMAN

SAINT IN MODERN DRESS

By Charles Norman

Teeth of the rain nibble the night, a wind prowls
like a file of Inquisitors with cowls;
in alleys of midnight, window-shades are drawn;
shadows lean over tables till the dawn;
shadows bulge in the chairs, or like tall fear,
stalk the dark corridors; thin and austere,
they pace the lonely streets until the dawn
smites them with purple doom and they grow wan
and vanish sorrowfully, leaving the city
to men and women aware of wonder and pity,
and palisades of dream. Then from the nest
glowing upon the branches of the east
the birds of light wing, tingling the chill sky,
and men and women wake and arise, and I
wake and arise to see the white dawn straying
over clusters of houses, and children playing
in the stern streets where spring will come a-maying;
and I remember joy and racked hands praying.

And fragments of the morning were borne by
on glittering wheels, the bright ware of the sky
in bales of hours upon vehicles
was sped to dissolution; far the hills
of sunrise smouldered, and now eastward, far,
the fragile ramparts of the palest star
faded. And I beheld the city stand
in taller towers arrayed, as in the land
of story did Troy Town; beholding, saw
the steeps of ecstasy were high as awe.
And in the streets where twilight loves to dwell,
the dragon afternoon in drowsy spell
lapped up the pools of heat with tongues of wind,
until the warm bogs of the air were thinned
to faintest evening, and the light became

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nor day nor dark, but dusk within vague flame;
and thin smoke, wonderfully curling, rose
from roofs like incense unto the day's close.

Then through one street, in the still evening,
I went alone, hearing in my heart sing
fragilely, the tiny spinet of my heart whose chords
are twilight-colored; and all about, with swords
smithied in fairy stories, stood fat elves
of thought, sternly, musing about themselves,
and wistful in the gloom. And where I went,
the houses swaddled in dark looked intent
with oblong orange eyes into the past
where shadowy houses brooded in the vast
expanse of time; and I knew the street led
now only to something that had been said
so many times,—reiteration palls.
I thought: there are mirrors beyond these walls
framing my soul, mirrors I cannot see
are dangling grotesque images of me;
while men and women stand before each glass
and do not know; and do not know I pass.

To what inordinate doom do I advance
surrounded by days armed with mischance
like a pale prisoner by sentinels
who marches deathward to a wall through cells
built with angles of agony where dwell
frail banished thoughts that linger as in hell?
A step to speculation or to rhyme:
suns like a string of beads stretch across time;
ghosts of a trillion years high overhead
in white invisible battalions tread
the deeps of air, mourning aloud when grief
leads the choiring of the winds. Now belief
peers no longer into windows. One tree
drips leaves. Cats drag shadows. Night like a sea
pours over the dykes of houses. My feet
tread darkness. Lamps make the gleaming street
Lyonesse. While a sad automaton
moves through vagueness to oblivion.

(Strange that these quiet streets I used to know
have changed to symbols through whose streets I go
as the mind probes the alleys named in books;
alleys by vaguer streets where whoso looks
finds troubled nothing sprinkled in the air
and ghosts of sombre days wandering there,
with moods as stolid as a rock with moss,
the four points of the compass and the cross.
There time is heaped in corners; its bright dust
was once the very visioning of lust
and the mind's meed of shining images;
and on the heaps of glitter, loneliness
casts the huge dread shadow.) Here, as I go,
I look upon the streets I used to know,

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telegraph-poles and fire-escapes where bloom
discarded blossoms of a crowded room;
and know these are of cities in the sea,
in lost lands overwhelmed by memory.

So to one house I came, amid the chime
of lugubrious bells of gloom and time,
and there were white and massive stairs to climb,
and vast implacable despair to rhyme;
then, entering, I saw, and ceased to walk,
marooned upon the islands of vague talk,
feeling more desolate for having come
only to fulfill my martyrdom,—
a saint in modern dress who might prefer
cream to sliced lemon. I began to stir,
making the brittle china crockery tinkle;
each of my eyes was crucified with a twinkle
as I replied, knowing as I replied,
something of me (I feared) of faith or pride
had failed; but to some gallantly I said
nothing at all, and bowing, turned my head
to see the bright lamps blossom in the gloom
and talking ladies in a drawing-room.

There is no peace, but words are being said
to aggravate the living, and the dead
writhe under arid acres of our talk;
while I through whirlpools of vague gestures walk
aware I am both caught and fugitive
and in the midst of those I must forgive.
By cups of tea, I swear, how am I strange?
I eat and dress and talk and go my range;
my ways, I think, are very like to yours:
I come and shut and open many doors.
(Withal, I breakfasted upon the morning,
nibbled the evening and no other thing,
and drank the wine of twilight to despair;
and musing on the garb I had to wear
I donned the symbol of the shirt of hair
that will not let me tarry anywhere;
while my bleak eyes captured the gleaming grail,
and forth I fared, knowing that I would fail.)

So with myself conversing I spoke on,
the dull ground shifted that I stood upon;
what though we rack ourselves and rack each other,—
to call this gentleman beside me, brother,
would take much more of Christ in me than I
desire to give away or crucify.
Yet I am sure you do not understand,
no more than I do, what we have at hand
to sift and worry, like the waves or sand
on the geography of a bleak land;
for, certainly, to go down to the shore
seems hardly the right method to explore
the desperate country that men call the mind;
unless, when backs are turned, and far behind

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the travelled countries lie, the traveller
can best recall the most of what they were,
the not-apparent when the traveller saw
the clustered buildings with the eyes of awe.

In time to come the tall immortal towers,
the tragic castles of story in hours
wreathed with splendor of the sunset-flowers,
roses of sunset,—all that once was ours
and our delight will fade, and be no less
than the sad substance of our loneliness;
and other towers will rise, to be consumed
by wind-tongued time, time that has time foredoomed.
Oh where does Faustus dwell since he has died?
Who else shall batter the battlements of pride?
The world still chants hosannas unto Zion,
yet none comes here to prod its ribs with iron.
And in this room, though we talk till sunrise,
till sleep effects a truce upon our eyes,
our eyes surprised and overcome by sleep,
not more than pride will any of us keep
upon the shadowed shelves of memory
for all that we have seen and yet will see.

We are somnambulists, by hugest dreams
lured to evil; our eyes are mad with gleams;
and not around the swelling neck of horror
can bells be hung to ward off certain terror.
To all this I reply, yes, yes, of course,
I have no fears (nor yet Ulysses' horse
to make an end of doubt behind the wall)
I bow politely, and ask: is this, then, all?
and have the answer ready, and dismissed,
and bow again above a dainty wrist.
But rising, I behold the curtained door,
the high dark door that looms above the floor
shaping itself in gloom that is much more
than fancy brewed in tea and fatal lore;
until I know what I would rather never,
though time should dawn upon the world forever,
have known at all. Come, winds of hazard, blow,
spiral the spinning globe, flutter with snow.

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PAUL CLAUDEL

By Edward Goldbeck

PAUL CLAUDEL is, as most people know, the French ambassador to the United States. He is, as few people know, a great poet. He is also a psychological anachronism, a miracle.

Let us look at him first through the eyes of famous French authors; his countrymen and intellectual kinsfolk ought to know him best. In a novel by François Mauriac, *La Robe prétexte,* an artist declares: "The Bible, Æschylus and Claudel make all other literature superfluous". Even though this sentence may have a flavor of irony, it shows Claudel's place in the literary hierarchy of France.

Remy de Gourmont explains that Claudel even in his youth shunned publicity. He left Paris, the Mecca of civilization, and went to a god-forsaken place somewhere in Asia as French consul. "A deserted pagoda serves him as a retreat and he lets his gaze float over yellow ants, sure that they cannot see his soul." And after this fantastic picture of the consular service Gourmont praises Claudel's genius.

André Gide, more prosaic but not less enthusiastic, says: "At present there are two kinds of plays: the one kind is not played, but it is important; the other one is played, but without any importance. Claudel's plays are more important than all the products of Donnay and Capus".

Charles-Louis Philippe: "He is as great as Dante".

Francis James: "He emerges from the Indian Ocean, soaked with the elemental life in which his soul has matured".

To these tributes we may add the judgment of one of the greatest modern German authors, Thomas Mann, who wrote—during the war while Claudel was fulminating against the Huns—: "Five years have passed since I read and reread with the deepest emotion and joy *L'Annonce faite à Marie* by Paul Claudel. I said at that time that it had given me the strongest poetic—the altogether strongest artistic, impression which I had received for a long time. Why should I not admit that I am fond of admiring and of losing myself, that at bottom I am bored, if there is nothing to love, to conquer and to penetrate? In such moments I feel old, while the enthusiasm for something creative teaches me that I am still young and makes me live again as in those days when the youth passionately immersed himself in Wagner's work. Yes, I fell in love with the thoughtful Christianity of the French poem which breathes so deeply and purely; with its delightful mixture of clarity and mysticism, its heavenly humaneness, its angelic voice, its noble, tender and humble responsiveness, its frail spirituality, its pious acquiescence—and I am absolutely sure that this tendency aims higher and means more than the prattle of coteries and literary dilettantes. France and Germany were one in the womb of the ages, before their paths separated and deadly hatred came between them. A common treasure of art and metaphysics unites them which cannot be attributed to one of them exclusively: out of the German mind France created Gothic art. Have you noticed that Claudel's work in its German translation reads almost like original poetry? Yes, the love which we feel for this poem is at the same time our joy in realizing the antique fraternity which was more than fraternity: unity".

And Richard Dehmel, the somber and profound German poet, wrote to Claudel's translator: "Here the voice of the critical intellect must be silent, only the soul listens breathlessly".

This is praise of Claudel; now let us try to understand him. The task is relatively easy. There are two dominating features in Claudel's make-up: he was born a poet and he became a Catholic.

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His childhood was spent among people who were indifferent to religion. He attended the Lycée Louis-Le-Grand and one day Renan, the renegade priest and author of the *Vie de Jésus,* presided at Commencement and handed a prize to young Claudel. Years afterwards the poet wrote: "I entered life with the kiss of Renan on my forehead". He uttered these words probably with a shudder of disgust, for he hates Renan and calls him "ignoble" and "hideous". This aversion is very natural, for Claudel, born in the Vosges Mountains, is like a granite rock in his certainty; Renan, the Breton, is undulating like the sea. Claudel says: "Humanity feels a horror for everything that is not the absolute". Renan jokes: "Everything is relative, even the absolute". Renan is ironical, Claudel didactic.

The young Claudel was forced to watch the lingering death of his grandfather, whose body was undermined by cancer. His soul was stirred and torn by pity, and at the Christmas celebration at Notre Dame in 1886, when he was eighteen years old, he had the revelation which struck Saul on his way to Damascus. "In one moment," he says, "my heart was touched and I believed. God exists, He is here. He is Somebody, He is just as personal a being as I." However, for three years doubts assailed him again and again. In his *Vers d'exil* he describes the struggle with God. At last he is vanquished, blissfully subjugated. From that time his entire work and life has been given to self-expression and self-evangelization. He has found his way, discovered his mission. Only his first drama, *Tête d'or,* is pagan in conception, a hymn to the hero who imposes his laws on the world and dies tragically. After that he becomes the Catholic poet.

The revelation showed him his task and gave him wisdom. "I have gone back to the earth which is the root of all solidity, I have touched the base which is below the foundation." His conception of the universe is not dynamic, but static. The world is a building with three stories like that of Dante, and when, in the drama *Le Repos du septième jour,* the Chinese emperor descends into the realm of the dead, it is really hell that he visits and the vision of the poet is Dantesque. How the infernal demon arouses everything that is evil in the human intruder is much more horrifying than Dante's tortures of the flesh. The ideas of infinity and evolution are hateful to Claudel. The world is a closed house. He prefers the winter to all other seasons. The rigidity of winter is here; farewell, beautiful summer. The remoteness and the pathos of the motionless are here. I prefer the absolute. Don't give me back to myself. Here is the inexorable cold, here is God."

A mystic, he sees God; but being a poet, he sees nature, too. He writes: "Every tree has its character, every little animal its task, every voice its part in the symphony; as one says that one understands music, so I understand nature. Years ago I discovered with delight that all things are bound together in a certain harmony and my eye proves to me the secret relationship by which the black of this pine is married to the light green of that maple, and insofar as I re-establish the primordial plan, I call my visit a supervision. I am the inspector of the creation, I examine everything that exists; the steadfastness of the world is my beatitude". In short, the poet is the interpreter of the universe, the organ of the divine spirit. Not psychologically, but metaphysically. A critic has said that Claudel's poetry was Christian in its intention, pagan in its execution. This is not so. Nature performs a never-ending ceremony, an eternal ritual before God. If Claudel finishes a scene with the appearance of a sunset or a rainbow, it is not done as a stage trick, as in Scribe-Meyerbeer's operas, it is a symbolic consecration.

Claudel is an objective genius. He thinks with his senses. All his words, says his friend and pupil Rivière, have light and sound, consistency, odor and taste. He feels a furious need of becoming one with the objects, an acrid passion for uniting himself with them. This is one of the qualities which is common to many poets, but Claudel never poisons nature by an infiltration of his morbid ego, like Lamartine, Chateaubriand and, even more, Baudelaire or Madame de Noailles. He does not sentimentalize nature. His re-

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lation to it is sane and simple. Pascal said: "The eternal silence of these infinite spaces appals me". Claudel looks at the stars as Adam laughed into the friendly eyes of the familiar animals around him. Nor is he a pantheist. God is everywhere, but He is not identical with nature. "This dear universe in my knowing hands," this world, "fresh as milk", is God's, but not God.

Neither is there anything sophisticated in Claudel's relation to God. No abstract spirituality, no preverse sensuality, no archeological trifling like in Huysmans. Here is the credo of the poet: "Be thanked, O Lord, Who have delivered me from the idol and made me to adore You alone and not Isis and Osiris, or justice or progress or truth or divinity or the laws of nature or art or beauty and Who have allowed all these things to exist which do not exist, or are only the emptiness which Your absence has left". And because he is so near to God, he can talk to Him in a joking way: "Heroes, saints, martyrs, virgins, You have galore, O Lord. But if you want to save a lazy-bones and a moron, an unclean, ungrateful, overweening, low-minded fellow, here am I, take me!"

He describes St. Joseph, not with a halo around his head, but with an old cap of rabbit-skin. Perhaps these are the ultra-naïve literary subtleties which are so dear to the sophisticated; or perhaps they are like the grotesque little figures which are found in and on the Gothic cathedrals. The human mind gets tired of being sublime and capers about. Maybe the second explanation comes nearer the truth, for Claudel does not belong to the æsthetes. He admires the human body, but not for its beauty. He never describes feminine charms; he sees it as a symbol, compares it to a tree, to the Cross, and derives from it all kinds of spiritual laws. The language in which he talks about it is unashamed, and there is never voluptuousness in it. But this language is racy, exact and symbolic, homely and grandiose.

What is Claudel's conception of his own poetry?

In his drama, *La Ville* Besme, the materialist, asks Coeuvre, the poet:

"Who are you and what are you good for?
You are not the buffoon who mounts on a table to amuse the public,
The stupid do not find any joy in your words and the wise do not find them instructive,
For the one cannot grasp their meaning and the others their root in the profound darkness like a tree."

And Coeuvre answers:

"Oh Besme, to understand who I am and what I say
You need another science
And to acquire it, it is sufficient to forget profane reasoning and open your eyes to that which is.
Oh Besme, if this leaf becomes yellow,
It is not because its channels are obstructed and it withers.
And it is not for the purpose that it may fall and protect and nourish the grains and the insects at the foot of the tree.
It gets yellow to furnish in a holy way ("saintement") to the next leaf which is red the chiming in of the necessary color.
All things are present, and the future and the past do not follow each other, but they are on the same plane."

The word "saintement" is all-important: it contains the justification of Claudel's cult of nature.

Later on Ivors, Coeuvre's son, says to his father:

"The heart is amazed when it hears you and does not know where to go.
He who expects the well-known rhythm does not know how to find a foothold in your verses,
They are not a path which guides, they are a sword which pushes him,
A torch in the night that walks in front of him.
The sound of the words and their sense, melted in one phrase,
Have such subtle changes and secret tunes that the soul which dwells with the mind
Feels that the pure idea does not refuse itself to a delightful touching."

And at another place:

"By and by thought is supplanted by peace. We are attuned to the melody of the world."

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And Claudel himself praised God: "Grant that he who hears my word may go home heavy and disquieted!" But the aim is to find the faith and, through faith, rest in God.

This poetic self-characterization leads over to the criticisms which must be made of Claudel's diction. Amiel has said that the French language gives only the *fait accompli* and not the evolution of the thought. Claudel tries to do that. He expresses a thought, he repeats it and adds something and modifies it and expresses it differently again and again, but the thought remains what it was. He violates grammar and syntax, he establishes himself as *poeta supra grammaticam*. He has a verse of his own, a prosody of his own, and rejects all theatrical conventions. He is a tyrannical autocrat and says frankly that a great poet can impose on the language not only his will, but his whims too.

This man, who is the traditionalist *par excellence*, behaves like a revolutionary in everything that has to do with craftsmanship. He assails Baudelaire, who wanted to plunge into the infinite to find new things, and says pertinently that he prefers to immerse himself in the finite, there to find the inexhaustible. But his thought and his diction are chaotic and he does not think it necessary to meet the reader halfway and make it a little easier for him to understand the message. Therefore some of his critics have called him "Teutonic". But the explanation can be found within the frontiers of France, in the development of French literature. As a youth Claudel was deeply impressed by Rimbaud. It was the period of wildest anti-classicism, and the iconoclast Rimbaud boasted that he expressed the inexpressible. He was what the Germans aptly call *genialisch*, but not a genius, and often he imagined that he was profound when he was only obscure. Claudel has never freed himself entirely of this influence. When he says: "We always write to somebody; the author does not write to anybody", he challenges four centuries of national literature. French literature has always been social. It was considered well-bred to be as clear as possible. The obscure, the solemn, the oracular, is not French. Easy-going Henry IV is French; Louis XIV, the pompous, is half Spanish. Claudel is that mixture of priest, prophet and poet which the Romans called *vates* and in his rôle of self-appointed interpreter of God he is as intolerant as any Torquemada. "Which reader of our classics would be able to guess that a God died for him on the Cross? This must change by all means," he writes to Rivière. He does not seem to have heard of "Athalie" or "Esther" or of the fact that Corneille translated the "Imitation of Christ". Bossuet and Fénelon, who were classics too, must have escaped his attention. Even a Jesuit, Father Josef de Tonquédec, protests against such a sweeping anathema.

"I lay great stress on my *Art poétique*, which has not been understood by anybody, so to say," Claudel writes. If he had a sense of humor, he could hardly have made this statement. It reminds one of the apocryphal utterance of Hegel: "Only one understood me and he misunderstood me". With a little more effort and Christian humility Claudel could probably have written a treatise which would have been within the reach of the normal human mind.

He had to have a metre of his own, the Claudelian verse, which, as he explains, is based on breathing. This pretentious theory has given some excellent practical results, not because it is a wonderful theory, but because its inventor is a wonderful poet. At other times it is simply childish. For instance:

"Car comme tout
A
Un poids et une mesure, tout vaut
Tout."

As Claudel is rich in metaphors, he abuses them. A lover says to his sweetheart: "You are fresh as a rose bedewed, you are like a fragrant flower, like a pheasant, like the dawn, like a peacock in paradise". All this in one sentence, and I have forgotten something! Maybe this gaudy accumulation is Oriental, biblical, but it is certainly bad in an Occidental of 1928. So we are often hustled from one picture to the other without time to breathe, without coherence. The poet seems unable to suppress anything that comes into his mind.

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This exuberance is particularly annoying in his dramatic products. Claudel's plays are not *vita in motu,* but philosophical dialogues. Somebody talks beautifully, but he says things which are absolutely alien to the situation and incompatible with his character. They have nothing to do with the plot and must be enjoyed like an aria, often of surpassing beauty. The style is a mixture of antique and modern; sometimes it smacks of the Nile and sometimes of the Boulevard des Italiens.

Claudel is a synthetic, not an analytical, poet. He is not a psychologist; his characters are types, bearers of ideas and ideals. His melodramatic way of making them black or white can be explained by the Christian idea that some are chosen and some are rejected, but this sheep-and-goat method does not enhance the effect of reality.

All his dramas are unified by his faith, their theme and thesis are dictated by religious doctrines. *La Ville* expresses the idea that every society which is not based on divine law must be miserable. One of the protagonists is Besme, a combination of Ford and Edison; he is desolate and kills himself because his science has made him barren. Claudel calls science without God *"la clarté noire"*. Besme confesses: "I have re-discovered ignorance. There is a science below science and we shall call it ignorance". And he says: "Through knowledge I have placed myself outside of knowledge". Lambert de Besme, a statesman, talks like Ruskin, and formulates a scathing indictment against materialism.

L'Echange scourges the idea that everything has exchange value and can be had for money. It was written in 1893-4, in Boston and New York. Claudel is not very flattering about American civilization. In another play of his a man who returns from America says: "Those people over there do not like their work. Their fruits are watery. They harvest suspect riches. They do not know how to work or to enjoy. Nothing matures as it does with us. Like worn-out old men, they adore sweets, they drink lemonade. Everything is made mechanically, the ornaments of the body and of the soul". The French ambassador is not bound to endorse this judgment.

Le Repos du septième jour, written in China, shows how Chinese cult ideas foreshadow Christianity.

In *Le Partage de midi* the woman, a being of nature, is redeemed by man in whom lives the divine spirit.

L'Otage praises the idea of Christian sacrifice and its continuation, *Le Pain dur,* shows the degration and desolation of souls which have destroyed Christ in themselves.

Of course all these themes are debatable. Edison or Mellon or Trotsky would each tell a different story, but Gourmont was right when he said that Claudel's dramas were important.

The greatest of his plays, the only flawless one, is *L'Annonce faite à Marie.* It is more than a beautiful poem, it is a revelation. Every word which these people say is inevitable; it could not be different. And the strange world into which we enter becomes familiar to us soon. It is as if we had been dwelling in it in times gone by and were only returning to the old abode. *L'Annonce faite à Marie* proves that the Catholic faith is fertilizing and pacifying. Listen to the words of Anne Vercors: "And now it is evening and the sun guides human beings and animals back as if with a hand. Now I spread my arms in the rays of the sun like a tailor who measures a garment. Now it is evening! Have pity, O Lord, on every human being, in this moment when he has finished his task and stands before you like a child who is showing his hands". Yes, thought is slowly replaced by peace and we are attuned to the melody of the world.

A great poet, subject to human weaknesses, sometimes eccentric, obscure, willful and prejudiced, but always sincere and serious, often rare and radiant, and in some moments divinely inspired, the "Catholic", the universal poet, a man with a medieval soul, a psychological anachronism, in short: a miracle.

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SURPRISE PARTY

By Viña Delmar

THE Ethan Allen Arms is an apartment-house somewhere north of Central Park. So far north, in fact, that the section in which the Ethan Allen Arms stands is just below Westchester. It is called Fordham. Westchester has estates, private homes and expensive apartments. Fordham has Letty Brown.

Fordham has many Letty Browns. One sees them in Weisbecker's Market keeping the weekly "table" expense down to ten dollars. One watches them on sunny afternoons pushing their baby carriages down the Grand Concourse. One spies them at the movies biting their nails. A Letty Brown bites her nails at the movies for two reasons. One reason is that she gets excited when she finds that the hero has not really been injured and that it was all a ruse of the villain's to get the heroine to his apartment. The other reason is that Letty Brown's baby has been left home alone in his crib and he might fall out of it, or he might get a coughing spell and choke to death, or perhaps smother himself with his blankets or all else failing might break his bottle and cut himself to pieces.

There are indeed many Letty Browns in Fordham. Not that cases of arrested development are indigenous to uptown New York. We have them in our best neighborhoods, but there is no place like Fordham for having one's own special case of arrested development in peace and quiet without anyone's being the wiser.

We are concerned with only one Letty Brown. She lived on the third floor of the Ethan Allen Arms. Her husband was an instalment collector for a furniture firm. When she'd married him he'd been an instalment collector for a clothing firm, which proves that there isn't anything like a loving wife to push one forward in this life.

Letty had bobbed, bronze-colored hair and cornflower-blue eyes. She was very pretty. Too thin, perhaps, and a trifle inclined to stoop-shoulders. That comes from pushing a baby-carriage and is overlooked by anyone with an ounce of tolerance. Letty had not been stoop-shouldered when Jim had first seen her.

They had met at Palisades Park. Letty had gone to the amusement park with two girl friends. Jim had gone with two boy friends. Surprising how well those things always come out at Palisades Park, and what's more, taken from uptown Manhattan's viewpoint, there is nothing wrong with this picture.

They met on a Tuesday—no, it couldn't have been a Tuesday. Let's see now. The wet-wash came back on Tuesday and Letty's aunt always expected Letty to help with the ironing so it must have been a Wednesday. They met on a Wednesday and the following Monday they were married. And Letty was just sixteen!

If you don't know Fordham and are at all interested in Letty you might ask why they were married and particularly in such a rush.

Well, it's a long story, but it has the advantage of only having to be told once, because it is the story of all Letty Browns with but slight minor variations. Jim Brown married Letty because he was tired of living in a furnished room and eating in Coffee Pots. He thought her exceedingly lovely and he believed her when she said that no man had even so much as kissed her before. Physical purity is the only virtue respected within a radius of three miles around the Ethan Allen Arms.

Letty married Jim Brown because this was love. He had broad shoulders. He called her "sweetheart". It thrilled her when he kissed her. True, he was the first man that had noticed that she was alive but you couldn't have convinced Letty that any other broad-shouldered man who kissed her and

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called her sweetheart would have been just as important to her as Jim. Besides when you got married you had an apartment of your own and people didn't treat you like a kid.

Letty's only relative, her aunt, permitted the marriage because Letty, in the four months since she'd been away from school, hadn't been able to get a job and it costs a lot to support a sixteen-year-old girl. Besides you never could tell when something —you know how it is—might happen and then where would Letty's aunt be?

Add it all together. It equals one marriage certificate, one three-room apartment uptown and the story of any Letty Brown picked at random.

Nature had intended Letty to be brighter. Perhaps no plans had been laid for her to startle the world with her brilliance, but she hadn't been intended to stew forever in a mess of misinformation, prejudices and delusions. But she had married at sixteen. She had married with her head full of the usual sixteen-year-old nonsense. She had married the first man to whom she had ever talked for any length of time. What is politely termed "life" had come abruptly upon her unused little brain. The routine of housekeeping, little domestic squabbles, childbirth, weary, dreary budgeting had filled her head since her sixteenth year. No time for anything else, no other thoughts. Thus do the tabloid papers gain another reader.

Letty had a friend. Her name was Florrie Morrissey. She also lived in the Ethan Allen Arms. Just across the hall from Letty. Florrie's husband worked in an office. He was almost forty years old. He intimidated Letty. He was an elderly gentleman. Florrie was only twenty-two. Her hair was straw-colored and her mouth was little and red. Letty adored Florrie Morrissey. She had wondered why Florrie had married Mr. Morrissey before she had known The Story. One day Florrie told her The Story.

Florrie had once been in love with a handsome young haberdashery clerk. She had loved him greatly. He had gone to Boston to open a shop of his own. He had promised to come back to Florrie. He had never come back. Instead somebody else came. Somebody who looked very much like him but who wasn't him at all—his son. Florrie had been unable to work because of the child, and her family had cast her off. Mr. Morrissey had appeared on the scene and had married her knowing 'all'. He had given her a home and her child a name. He had been kind to them both.

Letty had found herself trembling at the end of Florrie's story. It seemed in some strange, distorted way very beautiful. It wasn't a nice story. Nobody involved should have acted as they had. Even Mr. Morrissey had done what one might call condoning Florrie's looseness. Any decent man would have turned from Florrie. Still Letty felt different toward Mr. Morrissey when she saw him again. She felt like lighting his cigarettes for him. She wanted to buy him something real nice for Christmas.

The Morrisseys had tried to teach Letty and Jim to play auction pinochle. Jim had seemed an apt pupil but Letty simply couldn't learn. If she saw a queen of spades and a jack of diamonds in her hand she'd bid three hundred just as quick as anything. They taught her poker instead. That was fun. Very much like Old Maid, Letty thought. Sometimes the Morrisseys played in the Browns' living room and sometimes the Browns played in the Morrisseys' living room. The front doors had to be left open no matter which way they did it as both Letty and Florrie had a child whose cries had to be listened for.

Sometimes when they played at the Morrisseys' apartment, Florrie's sister Anna would come in. Anna was the one member of the family who had stuck to Florrie through thick and thin and hadn't run even when things got pretty darn thick. Anna was rather plump but she was very pretty and she dressed beautifully. She had a diamond and a car. She drove the car herself unless her boy-friend was with her. Then she let him drive it. Letty thought that was very nice of Anna. Letty knew how Anna happened to have so much money. Florrie had told her. A kind old lady had taken a fancy to Anna and had mentioned her in her will.

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It was Florrie who gave Letty the surprise party. After all, she reasoned, Letty would never be twenty again and there was nothing nicer than a surprise party. It would have to be in Florrie's apartment because there had to be decorations and it wouldn't be possible to keep Letty out of her own place while they were decorating. It was going to be hard enough to keep her out of Florrie's place. Florrie decided that she would wait till the last minute to do the decorating. While Letty was bathing the kid would be a good time. Sooner kingdoms should topple and the sun falter in its course than that Letty should suspect a party was to be given for her.

Jim was "in" on the secret of course. He arranged with the janitor's wife to come up and mind the baby. No leaving doors open tonight. There would be noise unless, of course, the party was a flop. He also got Letty to run to the barber's right after dinner to have her hair trimmed. This was accomplished by telling her that she looked as sloppy as hell. When she got back he said that seeing that it was her birthday she ought to dress up a bit. Lastly he—oh so casually—suggested that they go across the hall and visit the Morrisseys.

"I'm damn sick of all the doors being open, too, all the time," said Jim. "I told the janitor's wife to come up tonight and watch the kid."

The bell rang.

"There she is now."

Jim ran to the door before Letty could say, "I'll be damned". She was astounded at Jim's extravagance. After all, it is no light thing to tie up the evening of a Fordham janitor's wife. It had not yet occurred to Letty that unusual things were afoot. Putting two and two together was not Letty's long suit.

Mrs. Czlopiz, the janitor's wife, sat down in the morris-chair and took out her sewing. She was an angry looking woman. Looks are not uniformly deceiving. Mrs. Czlopiz was always angry. One wonders what in her appearance or expression gave Letty the feeling that her child was now going to be watched and guarded. One wonders and envies a little the faith of a Letty Brown.

"Well, what are you waiting for now?" Jim asked.

"Go ahead," ordered Mrs. Czlopiz.

Letty went ahead. She and Jim crossed the hall to the Morrisseys' apartment. Jim rang the bell because the door was locked. Letty heard Florrie laugh. Then there was quite a lot of noise as though several people were walking down the hall.

"Gee," said Letty, "sounds like they got company."

The door flew open. Letty's startled eyes beheld what seemed like millions of people crowding the little hall. Florrie and Mr. Morrissey were there. Also Anna and her boy-friend. Mr. and Mrs. Davids—from the first floor—laughed at Letty's perplexed face and they all united and shouted, "Surprise!"

Jim pushed Letty into the apartment and the door was closed. Everybody was laughing and pulling at Letty and saying "Happy birthday".

The living room looked something lovely. You know those paper things that are flat upon purchase and open out accordion fashion to incredible lengths? Well, Florrie had bought a lot of them. They were strung criss-cross with their centers meeting at the chandelier. There were four vases of artificial flowers and a sign hung over Baby Stuart's picture which said:

HAPY BIRTHDAY TO LETTY

Florrie had printed the sign herself. It had taken the better part of the afternoon and she and Mr. Morrissey had had quite a quarrel over it.

"There are two p's in happy," he had said when he had come home from the office.

Florrie had eyed him with withering scorn. "Don't you suppose I know that, you fathead? But I'm a busy woman. Do you think I got nothing to do all day but stand around putting two p's in happy?"

He was the only one who had any adverse criticism for Florrie's pretty work of art. Letty simply adored it. Anyone could have seen it in her eyes.

When she had gazed a satisfying amount of time upon the decorations, Florrie con-

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ducted her to the radio table. Piled upon the radio set were some boxes. Florrie had stated in no uncertain terms that she expected gifts for Letty.

Everybody watched while Letty untied the boxes. She was embarrassed. She would like to have opened them when she was alone. There was an orange-colored chiffon scarf from Anna. A bottle of perfume from Mr. and Mrs. Davids. An hysterical looking nightgown from Florrie and a pair of gloves from Mr. Morrissey. Jim had put his present there. It was a big, green silk chrysanthemum to wear upon the collar of her coat in the event of her getting a coat to wear it on. The last box was Anna's boy-friend's offering. It was flowers. Nobody had ever given Letty flowers before. She took them from the box and looked at them. They were gardenias. Unearthly white, eerily sweet. For a moment Letty stood spell-bound gazing at the flowers. Florrie's apartment and the people surrounding her melted away. And in their places came nothing at all. Blankness. For Letty Browns have nothing with which to replace their Florries and their Jims when for one terrifying second Florries and Jims lose their accustomed importance.

Letty looked up from the flowers. "What a pretty little bouquet," she said.

"It's a corsage," Anna informed her. "Let me pin it on for you."

Anna dived into the box for the pins which she knew would be there. She handed Letty the card which had lain on the flowers. It was her boy-friend's personal card. Letty examined it carefully. She ran her fingers over the name to see if it was engraved. It was. Mr. Lewis Marshall. A line had been drawn through the name, however, which made Letty wonder. On the other side of the card she found a message for herself.

"Dear Birthday Lady," it read, "I hope you have more birthdays than anybody ever had before and that each is happier than its predecessor."

Letty put the card in her pocket. That was nice of Lew Marshall. He wrote nicely, too. Jim didn't. He never used a capital "i" when he meant the personal pronoun. She had more education than Jim and had told him about capitals in the early days of their marriage.

"Oh," he had said, "that's all right for women but a fellow's got to be hustling about his job. Fellows can't bother about things like that."

She never corrected him after that. Perhaps men didn't bother to follow the rules she had been taught. But Lew Marshall did. How was that? A little pucker appeared on Letty's brow. She hated to be perplexed.

"Let's have a drink," Florrie sang out.

Mr. Morrissey brought a quart of gin from the kitchen. It had originally come from the delicatessen store. Its line could be traced no farther back than that.

"There's a bottle of Scotch in my pocket," said Mr. Davids.

"Lew brought some rye—good rye," said Anna, crushingly.

They started on the gin. Letty didn't want any but everybody had been so kind to her that there just wasn't anything to do about it.

Florrie got some dance-music on the radio and seized upon Lew Marshall for a partner. Anna never took her eyes off Florrie all the time that they danced. Letty thought that Anna must like to watch people dance.

Mr. Morrissey wanted to dance with Letty. Florrie, under the delusion that she could make more room, deserted Lew just long enough to push a few chairs around and place her table lamp out of harm's way. In a minute everybody was dancing except Anna and Mr. Davids.

When the music stopped there was more gin poured. The quart went fast. Mr. Morrissey was for going to the delicatessen store for more. Everybody pleaded with him not to go except Florrie.

"Don't be a fool," Anna said. "Lew's got some rye."

"What do you want to go out for?" Davids asked. "I got something here."

Mr. Morrissey looked questioningly at Florrie.

"Go ahead," she directed. "Are you waiting for a push?"

"Gee," Jim said, "don't she talk nice to

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her husband? If she was mine I'd give her a sock in the eye."

"Yes, you would," said Letty, scornfully.

In the end Mr. Morrissey went to the delicatessen store. While he was gone the others drank Mr. Davids's Scotch. It became necessary to drink Mr. Davids's Scotch if ill-feeling was to be avoided. Mr. Davids seemed to consider that an insult of no mean proportions had been dealt him. Mr. Davids's Scotch was attended to in a thoroughly workmanlike manner, Lew Marshall being the only one who contented himself with one small swallow.

By the time Mr. Morrissey returned from the delicatessen store the party had reached a peak. Letty was lying on the sofa in a state of miserable indecision. Anna and Jim were doing an Apache dance. Florrie was sitting on Lew Marshall's lap and the Davids were laughing loudly and gleefully at Anna. She really was awfully funny but the funniest thing to Letty was that no matter what happened in the course of the dance Anna never took her eyes off Florrie and Lew.

The appearance of Mr. Morrissey put an end to the performance. Jim and Anna were eager for further refreshments. Florrie slipped from Lew Marshall's arms and began gathering glasses together. Letty watched Florrie darting about the room. She knew that in a few minutes she would be feeling better but just for the moment she preferred to lie quietly on the sofa. She hoped she wouldn't be made, in the name of sociability, to torment her stomach further. Her eyes suddenly shifted to Jim. He was kissing Anna.

Letty continued to lie on the sofa. She said nothing nor did she move. Anna was in love with Lew. Jim was in love with Letty. This was Florrie's apartment. Florrie was her friend. Nothing could happen here, especially on her birthday, that wasn't right. No use to feel—was it jealous? Was it mad? Letty tried to find out what she felt. It was something like a dull ache. Something like getting a tooth in a space where there isn't any room for another tooth.

"Letty, watch your husband," Mrs. Davids called, playfully. "Anna's vamping him."

"Hope she does a good job," Letty returned.

Everybody laughed. It was a good party. They were dancing again now. Anna was in Jim's arms, smiling up at him. The light was shining on her bar-pin. It was all diamonds and it glittered reassuringly at Letty. What does Anna want with Jim? it asked. No, of course, Anna and Jim didn't want each other but Letty hadn't known before that Jim would kiss another woman. Well, she knew it now.

Nobody thought about kisses nowadays anyhow. Lew Marshall and Florrie were petting, too. Mr. Morrissey was talking to the Davids. He was telling them funny stories. Nobody would have guessed it, though, from the expression on his face.

Letty got up and went to where he sat with the Davids. Mr. Morrissey put his arm around her waist and made her sit on his knee. Florrie and Lew Marshall got up to dance. Florrie bumped into the table.

"Take it easy, Flo," Lew advised her. "The ship's rocking."

Florrie laughed with a light and easy scorn and held her arms out to him. She wanted to dance, of course, but there seemed something almost indelicate in the warm invitation of her round, white arms.

They bumped into a great many things while they danced. Letty wondered if Florrie was really terribly drunk or if Lew said things that took Florrie's whole attention. Some of the things he said made Florrie scream with laughter. Anna was laughing a great deal, too. Their laughter and the blare of the radio would have been noise enough even if Mrs. Davids had not taken it into her head to shout now and again to Anna or Florrie.

At eleven-thirty Mr. Czlopiz came up to request a little quiet.

"How little?" asked Florrie.

"The other tenants are complaining," Mr. Czlopiz explained. "Myself I don't care, but the other tenants."

"Have a drink, big boy," said Florrie, "and don't laugh at our gin; you were young and dangerous once yourself."

Mr. Czlopiz had a drink. Almost at once he had another drink. He departed with

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a greater understanding. The party continued. Mr. and Mrs. Davids announced that they had to go.

"Don't be silly," Florrie begged. "You don't have to go for hours."

"Yes, we have to go," Mrs. Davids said.

"Well, wait till you have something to eat," Florrie urged. "I'm going to fix something to eat right away."

Mrs. Davids smiled and said no more on the subject of leaving. She had known that there would be something to eat and had left herself a wide margin of time for eating it. Her threat about leaving was only meant as a slight reminder for Florrie to start making the coffee.

Florrie went to the kitchen. Letty wanted to go, too, and help.

"You stay here, Letty," Florrie said. "It's your birthday and you've got to be waited on."

Letty stayed in the living room. Lew Marshall went to the kitchen instead.

"Are you having a good time?" Mr. Morrissey asked Letty.

"Yes," she said.

Jim had drunk too much. He was trying to carry Anna on his back. Anna was heavy.

"Jim, don't do that," Letty cried. "You'll hurt yourself."

Jim appeared not to hear her. Anna smiled at Letty, a little too sweetly, a little too pityingly. The horseplay continued.

Letty put her face down on Mr. Morrissey's shoulder. She felt ashamed. Jim hadn't answered her and Anna had laughed at her. She was right in telling him to stop. Why did she feel ashamed? She hated Anna for making Jim forget to answer her. And Jim had kissed Anna. He'd have kissed Anna even if Letty hadn't been there watching. That idea came as a shock to Letty. It came with the awful force of undoubtable logic. What would Jim do if there was no way of her ever finding out? She'd never thought of that before.

The something to eat of which Florrie had spoken began to arrive. Ham. Cheese. Rye bread. Crackers. Pickles. A birthday cake. White, of course, with two pink doves and "Greetings" inscribed upon it.

"Don't mind my china-ware," Florrie charged as she brought in the coffee. "Nothing matches nothing else. I'd 'a' used my good stuff only it's dusty."

Nobody minded. Lew Marshall lit the candles on the cake. Letty blew at them after making a wish. Two lights still flickered palely.

"You don't get your wish," said Mrs. Davids. "You didn't blow them all out."

"No, I don't get my wish," said Letty. It was just as well for Anna that such was the case.

The eating began and silence fell. Everybody was terribly hungry. Everybody but Letty.

"Now we just have to go," said Mrs. Davids when there was no more ham or cheese.

"Oh, wait a while," said Florrie.

"No, really," said Mrs. Davids and she arose purposefully.

The Davids went. The others sat about the table smoking. Letty didn't smoke but she sat there.

Presently Anna got up and said, "Come on, Jim, let's dance."

"Lay off Jim for a while," Florrie interposed. "It's a wonder Letty ain't wild the way you've been throwing yourself at Jim."

"Oh, is that so?" Anna asked, walking toward Florrie. "I suppose I'm the only one around here been throwing myself at a person. Why don't you lay off Lew?"

"For Heaven's sake—" Lew began.

Florrie was too fast for him. "I been throwing myself at Lew Marshall? Why, he hasn't given me a moment's peace. If you want to know, Anna, I'll tell you something—"

"I'm sure Anna doesn't want to know," Mr. Morrissey said, quietly.

Letty had a feeling that it was Mr. Morrissey who didn't want to know.

"Please don't fight," Letty said. "I don't care if Anna wants to dance with Jim."

Lew Marshall got up and went for his coat.

"Where are you going?" Anna asked him.

"Home. Are you coming?"

"Wait a while."

"I'm going now," Lew insisted.

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He was mad. His eyes were hot-looking. In a way Letty didn't blame him. After all Florrie had more than met him halfway and had then put all the blame on him. That wasn't decent of Florrie. Letty was amazed at her.

"You'd better go with him," Florrie said. "He'll be buying a car and diamonds for someone else if you don't. He's pretty free with his offers."

"Florrie, you're drunk," said Mr. Morrissey.

Letty looked down at the flowers at her waist. It was nicer to look at the flowers. It hurt to look at Florrie with her little red mouth spouting vile things or at Jim with his expression of one who is being vastly entertained.

"He'll not be buying anything for you," Anna said to Florrie. "This fellow'll do what I say. I know plenty about him so I'm not worried."

"Are you coming home?" asked Marshall.

Anna laughed. "Sure, darling," she said. "Just wait till I get into my little coat and hat."

She got her coat and hat. "Good-night, everybody," she said. Anna was smiling. Letty looked away from her. She did not see but she knew that Anna patted Jim's shoulder as she passed him.

Florrie did not say good-night to Lew nor Anna. The door slammed behind them. Mr. Morrissey poured some drinks. Letty refused hers. Florrie drank and was immediately very ill. She withdrew from the company. When she returned she flung herself on the sofa. Jim went to sit beside her. He talked to her in the low tones popularly supposed to be soothing.

Mr. Morrissey poured himself another drink. He never looked in Florrie's direction nor did he inquire how she felt. When the second drink was gone he poured another. Letty got up and walked restlessly about the room.

In the corner farthest from Jim and Florrie, Mr. Morrissey joined her. He put his hands on her shoulders and looked into her eyes.

"You're awfully sweet," he said. "You know, Letty, you're the sweetest girl I ever met."

He wanted to kiss her. Letty turned her face from him. She could not get out of the corner without pushing him away.

"Give me a little kiss, Letty."

"Mr. Morrissey, don't."

"Can't you call me anything but 'Mr. Morrissey'?"

"No."

"Oh, come on."

He put his arms about her. She tried to shake him away. He was not steady on his feet and fell against the china closet. A platter which had been poised at a precarious angle slipped and pushed a gravy-boat off the shelf. It clattered and banged to its death.

"To hell with it," moaned Florrie.

Letty seized on the gravy-boat's demise as a help in her extremity.

"Go sit down, Mr. Morrissey," she said. "You'll wake the kid."

"What do I care?" Mr. Morrissey asked. "It's not my kid, anyhow. It belongs to some guy Florrie used to know."

Letty's lips flew apart as though she wanted to speak. Nothing but a gasp came. Something had happened to her stomach. She was very ill, desperately sick.

Far away she heard Jim's voice, "Well, it was a good party. Even Letty drank enough to pass out".

For two days afterward Letty had a blinding headache. In all her life she had never had a headache before. When the headache disappeared she went again to stroll down the Concourse with Florrie.

"Well," said Florrie, "of course you and I got sick and some of us got nasty but I think it was a good party anyhow. The main thing is that you were surprised. You were surprised, weren't you, Letty?"

"Oh, yes," said Letty, faintly. "I was terribly surprised."

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CONTESTING MR. SHAW'S WILL

An Analysis of G. B. S.'s Final Word on Women and Socialism

By Rebecca West

THE prodigious athleticism of Mr. George Bernard Shaw has manifested itself once more in this volume on Economics, which is as big as a brick and as clear as crystal. There can be nothing better for the style of a generation than for a *magnum opus* to be written with extravagant intricacy and obscurity. The young men in their desperate effort to make it clear to themselves acquire a bias towards clarity which never leaves them. Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* —which is, perhaps, the worst written of all books of pre-eminent importance to mankind —performed that service for Mr. Shaw's generation, and since he started with the advantage of speaking Irish-English (more like eighteenth century English than that spoken in England, since Ireland kept itself remote from the Romantic confusion which befell English literature in the nineteenth century owing to its political preoccupation), this early training has made him able to write prose as cool and crisp as a good salad. His style is infinitely more definite and diagrammatic than that of the younger generation, who, in the pursuit of their preoccupations—which one might fairly put down as Psychology and Literature—encounter no authors more reluctant to impart their meaning than Freud or Watson or James Joyce and Marcel Proust, and anybody who slogs away at these authors can get at what they mean easily enough: it is a matter of time rather than of effort.

Hence we have no horror of a certain mild degree of complexity. And since Mr. Shaw's generation were engaged in discussing Economics with an idea of discovering the principles on which to base immediate legislative action, he has a propagandist habit of allowing himself the extremist latitude of statement, provided he can hit off something telling and inspiring. This amounts at times to an extremely high and mighty method of treating that object which ought to be sacred, the fact. It is exquisitely painful to a generation which, dealing in its preoccupations with material so inveterately subjective that it is the hardest thing in the world to maintain fidelity to reality and keep out sheer maunderings, likes the objectively verifiable to be objectively verified.

We of this generation are professorial in the manner of the professors in comic papers, peering at everything in a near-sighted sort of way, expressing ourselves in very long words with a great deal of stammering. Mr. Shaw is a herald, dressed in scarlet on a white horse. Enter with flourish.

Hence male and female readers alike will find *The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism* (Brentano, $3.00) provocative alternately of awe and frenzy. The awe comes when one reads the chapters on "Money" and "Banking", which for airy expertise in handling subjects not superficially picturesque surpasses even Mr. Hartley Withers, and such bravura triumphs of the expository as the chapter on "Compensation for Nationalism". The frenzy comes when Mr. George Bernard Shaw, for reasons known only to himself remarks, "You prove to people that as teetotallers they will dwell in their own houses instead of in a frowsy tenement, besides keeping their own automobile, having a bank-account, and living ten years longer. They angrily deny it; but when you crush their denials by unquestionable American statistics . . . . ." *Unquestionable American statistics* . . . At this point the reader who belongs to this generation will groan and fall into a trance, calling on the name of Raymond Pearl in such piteous accents that those standing by will take him for one near and dear to the sufferer. One only wonders whether there

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has not been some slight mistake, whether he has not meant to tell us that if we became teetotallers we will live one year longer and keep ten automobiles, or live in ten banks instead of a tenement. The mind runs up and down the statement trying to find a way out into reality.

This sort of thing goes on all through the book. I myself have spent many weary hours attempting to convince silly doctrinaire feminists that any scheme for a glorious future for women which depends on the pooling of children in communal care is as feasible as a scheme for a happy home life which involves living on Blackwell's Island, since most of the women in the world who can take care of children would so much prefer to be looking after their own children, that if they are forced to look after other people's, a psychological resistance is set up which in the end makes them incapable of looking after those children. But all the same, frenzy visits me when I read Mr. Shaw's assertion that *most* children brought up in Institutions die, a statement which is perhaps true of the notorious Foundling Hospitals in Naples and St. Petersburg during the last century, places where they certainly had a brisk way with the birth-rate, but which is glaringly untrue of our climes and our times.

Sometimes this contempt for fact goes rather deeper than one likes in making his view of his subject unreliable: for example, in his chapter on the personal helplessness which has come on us since the Industrial Revolution and the increasing degree to which, instead of doing a job from start to finish, we now do over and over again some tiny fraction of that job and are as incapable as a new-born babe of producing any completed article of commercial value or private use. And he blames this on the capitalist system, when plainly it was bound to happen under any economic dispensation whatsoever, once machinery had been developed beyond a certain pitch. Once that has happened there is bound to arise a psychological problem of how to get a man in happy relationship to his work, which is not likely to be solved, as Mr. Shaw suggests, simply by a new arrangement concerning the distribution of leisure.

Curiously enough it is always Mr. Shaw's own contribution to his age that he seems to ignore when he looks round on life. It is partly the result of what he has done in extending one's sense of the liveliness of humanity and the individuality of all human beings which makes our generation conscious of such psychological problems as those he has ignored in the machine-minder. He does it again in the course of his really extraordinary attack on modern education, chiefly on the ground, which I cannot think substantial, that in 1896 the secretary of the Union of Mathematical Instrument Makers told him that most of the members of that Union signed with a mark. He dismisses education as ineffective in these helpful terms: "The poor woman's child is imprisoned for nine years under pretext of teaching it to read, write and speak its own language: a year's work at the outside. And at the end of the nine years it can do none of these things presentably. . . ."

Mr. Shaw denudes himself of lawfully earned honor by failing to recognize that thousands of men and women teachers have been inspired by himself and Mr. H. G. Wells to make modern education into something which, though far from ideal, is nevertheless so good that his slapdasheries against it strike one as shocking and a clumsy libel.

It must be admitted that quite a few of Mr. Shaw's attempts to apply his doctrine to contemporaneous affairs are definitely embarrassing, but nevertheless this does not invalidate his work as a whole. It cannot be overemphasized that this defect results from the duality of Mr. Shaw's functions in the past. When he was actively participating in the Socialist Movement in the closing decades of last century he knew that the economic and political doctrine he and his Fabian friends had worked out was absolutely the best on the market at that moment, and he therefore felt justified, when he called on the public to adopt it, in recommending it with the unrestrained floridity of the barker. If that seems shocking to our generation it is only because the economic and political perplexities created by the war can-

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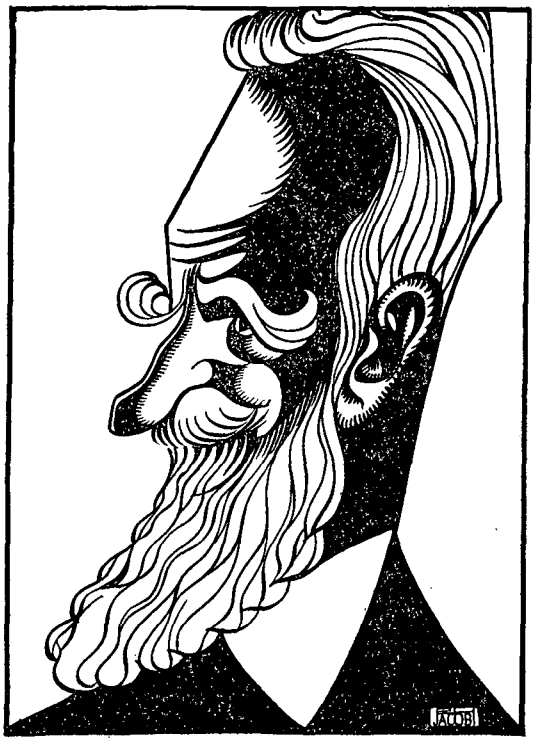
not be solved as neatly and expeditiously as the administrative problems of England in the last century, and there is no question of putting a concise programme over to the electorate; consequently there is no barking to be done. In point of fact, once this psychological difference has been allowed for, this book is rather above the heads of the modern Radical. Nowadays it seems to be generally believed that all the mental furniture necessary for such heads is a belief, unsupported by knowledge or argument, that the Allies were solely responsible for the late war, a view which, if it were supported by knowledge or argument, would be respectable and interesting but which, since it is not, does as much good to the person who holds it—and the world at large—as the popular notion that wearing ear-rings improves the eyesight; and a willingness to muse sympathetically on the affairs of Russia, a sheer waste of time, as, thanks to the co-operating and co-equal silliness of Bolshevists there and the Conservative old women here, one has no clear ideas of how affairs in Russia actually are, and, in any case, if one had, one could draw from them no conclusions in the least relevant to one's own being, since conditions in Russia are so entirely different from those in the United States and Great Britain. Such heads may be made much more comfortable habitations for constructive thought if their owners turned from these vaguenesses and read what Mr. Shaw has to say about the fundamental problems concerning land and industry and money.

So much for the book in its appeal to the general reader. There remains the matter of its special mission. It is "The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism" written by a man. One gathers that it owes its existence to a request made to Mr. Shaw by his sister-in-law for a letter that would explain Socialism to her. "I thought," says Mr. Shaw in the Appendix to this volume, "of referring her to the hundreds of books which have been written on the subject; but the difficulty was that they were nearly all written in an academic jargon which, though easy and agreeable to students of economics, politics, philosophy and sociology generally, is unbearably dry,



George Bernard Shaw, by Jacobi

meaning unreadable, to women not so specialised. And then, all these books are addressed to men. You might read a score of them without ever discovering that such a creature as a woman had ever existed." Behind all this lies, one perceives, the assumption that women are definitely inferior to men in their grasp of one of the most vitally important subjects that the intellect includes in its purview, so definitely inferior that they cannot understand text-books dealing with it; and the writers of such books take it for granted that their readers will be exclusively male and limit themselves to material of interest to men and, Feminist though I am, I do not feel inclined to dispute that assumption. I freely admit its truth because I know that the inferior grasp of Economics manifested by women is not due to any intellectual inferiority. In point of fact no adequate exposition of the theory of rent is more difficult to follow (though it may be more difficult to compose, which is another matter) than the directions for knitting a child's pair of woolly panties; and there are

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many other feminine activities that have it beaten at the post for complexity. There drifts in and out of my London apartment a little Cockney upholstress whose capacity to construct slip-covers for different types of furniture from what would seem wholly inadequate measurements, shows that she possesses complete mastery of the principles of plane geometry, though doubtless she never heard the name of that branch of science. If women do not concern themselves with the study of Economics as men do it is simply because they are not equally interested; and that is not to their discredit. For it is not due to lethargy. It is due to a profound scepticism concerning the value of male ratiocination concerning the fundamentals of existence which is very far from being without just cause.

How justified that scepticism is may be seen from Mr. Shaw's chapter in which he exonerates himself from the charge he lays against other economists of ignoring women, and treats of their position in the labor market. This chapter is full of straws which show the way a certain wind blows—and the course of that wind makes women doubtful, it is so very obvious that that wind bloweth where it listeth and is not oriented by any compulsion exerted by reality. As one trifling but not insignificant matter, one may mention that Mr. Shaw gives a fresh lease of life to an ancient and baseless legend when he writes "Later on the middle classes made Parliament protect their women by the Married Women's Property Acts under which we still live; and these Acts, owing to the confusion of people's minds on the subject, overshot the mark and produced a good deal of injustice to men".

Now when I expose this legend I do so most handsomely, because I have made much money in my time by its persistence. Mr. Shaw is alluding to certain laws of which the most important is that which holds a husband responsible for goods supplied to his wife whether she pledged his credit with his knowledge or not. This at times produces monstrous hard cases: the hardest I can remember being that of Lady Cathcart (she of the turps) who pledged the credit of Lord Cathcart in order to get gowns for a trip of which that unfortunate peer first learnt from the note which she left on the pin-cushion. Every time one of these hard cases comes up in the Courts, once every two or three years or so, the Judge or some anti-feminist journalist gabbles at great length on the injustice to man and the unfair privileges enjoyed by women. Some enterprizing paper then calls me up and asks me to write an article on the subject, usually with a nasty sneer in its voice as if to say "Now this is a nasty hole for you Feminists; I don't see what you can do about it".

I write the article (and go to a great deal of pains to make it a different one every time), pointing out that Parliament, although at times insane, has never been insane enough to pass a law for the sole purpose of protecting criminals. The persons whom the law intends to protect, and whom it does, in fact, very effectively protect, are the tradesmen, who could never send out goods on credit at all if every dishonest husband in the country were able to secure the use of them free by the simple expedient of getting his wife to order them and then declaring that she had done so without his knowledge. My article is followed invariably by a number of letters from tradesmen pointing out that what I say is perfectly true and begging for their protection that the law should be left in its present state—and the matter then dies down. The next hard case, however, brings up the agitation in exactly the same form as before. This, as may be seen, is excellent business for me, but I cannot help wondering why that agitation always starts again in exactly the same form. Why is a public that is usually intelligent enough about legal matters, and extremely ready to learn and keep up with alterations to the code, utterly unable to grasp this practical and very simple point? I cannot help feeling that it is because it is a point that is made against women. The desire to make a case against women, if only for a few days, is so strong that to get it the public will push to the back of its mind knowledge of which it is really in possession. Facts, indeed, have always gone down before anti-feminist passion and you will get a further example of this, and a more striking one, in Mr.

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Shaw's discussion of why women were paid so very much less than men. What he says on women's wages is curiously not applicable to modern conditions, the whole tone of his writing as in many parts of his book suggests that he is writing of pre-war England. But it is worth going into what he says as a study of what women's practical experience of the validity of the Science of Economics has been in the past. He writes:

"This is how it is done. A labourer finds himself bringing up a family of daughters on a wage of twenty-nine shillings a week in the country (it was thirteen in the nineteenth century), or, in or near a city, of from thirty (formerly eighteen) to seventy, subject to deductions for spells of unemployment. Now in a household scraping along on thirty shillings a week another five shillings a week makes an enormous difference: far more, I repeat, than another five hundred pounds makes to a millionaire. An addition of fifteen shillings or a pound a week raises the family of a labourer to the money level of that of a skilled workman. How were such tempting additions possible? Simply by the big girls going out to work at five shillings a week each, and continuing to live at home with their fathers. One girl meant another five shillings, two meant another ten shillings, three another fifteen shillings. Under such circumstances huge factories sprang up employing hundreds of girls at wages of from four-and-sixpence to seven-and-sixpence a week, the great majority getting five. These were called starvation wages; but the girls were much better fed and jollier and healthier than women who had to support themselves altogether. Some of the largest fortunes made in business: for example, in the match industry, were made out of the five shilling girl living with, and of course partly on, her father, or as a lodger on somebody else's father, a girl lodger being as good as a daughter in this respect. Thus the match manufacturer was getting three-quarters of his labor at the father's expense. If the father worked in, say, a brewery, the match manufacturer was getting three-quarters of his labor at the expense of the brewer. In this way one trade lives by sweating another trade; and factory girls getting wages that would hardly support a prize cat are plump and jolly and willing and vigorous and rowdy, whilst older women, many of them widows with young children, are told that if they are not satisfied with the same wages there are plenty of strong girls who will be glad to get them. It was not merely the daughters, but the wives of working men who brought down the women's wages in this way . . . . The labour market is infested with subsidised wives and daughters willing to work for pocket money on which no independent woman or widow can possibly subsist."

Now this is pure balderdash; I say so with no disrespect to Mr. George Bernard Shaw, for he has not originated it. This is the traditional economist's explanation of the disproportionate lowness of women's wages. It was of course inevitable that women's wages should be lower than men's. There was a reason that was bound to be respected in the rough and ready world we live in for paying women very much less than men: it is undoubtedly true that the majority of men keep dependents and the majority of women do not. This was bound to cause hardship to those women, not at all rare, who have to keep their parents, their younger brothers and sisters, or their fatherless children; but on the whole, had women's wages been calculated on the basis of a single person's subsistence the lot of the working-women would not have been so bad. What made it intolerable was that men used the undeniable fact that women seldom had to keep a family as an excuse to pay her wages that would not enable her to keep a stomach. To cover up the villainy of these proceedings they then developed this beautiful subsidization theory. There is nothing whatsoever in it. There were no armies of workmen who were paid such handsome wages that they could present to each of their daughters the considerable sum of money which makes up the difference between five shillings a week and the even pre-war cost of maintaining an adolescent girl or a grown woman. In point of fact the workmen who could do so very sensibly used their position of advantage to hold back their daughters from any but the cleaner and more remunerative trades. The textile workers, the aristocrats of labor, would have nothing to do with this five shillings a week business, but

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insisted that their daughters should come and work alongside them and be nearly as well treated. The home of the five shilling a week girl is pre-eminently a town like Reading, where the men were paid such miserable wages that they had to turn out their children to make what wages they could, and could not stand behind them to make terms.

The woman worker who was paid starvation wages was in fact starved. She obviously did not starve altogether to the point of dying in the general run of cases, but she was half-starved, quarter-starved, eighth-starved. Even though she did live at home and was freed from the necessity of paying for her room and board at a rate that allowed a landlady a profit, that not very substantial advantage would not raise her to the adequately-fed and adequately-clothed state guaranteed the average male worker of her age and status by his wage. And there is as little in that other reason which was given for paying women this proportionately low wage by employers and by economists and which is echoed by Mr. Shaw, that since women leave industry to get married after only a few years' work, the employer has to recoup himself for the time he wastes teaching these short-time employees by paying them as little as possible. This is, of course, a valid excuse in certain industries where skilled labor is concerned. But unfortunately it was used most frequently by those who were employing women to perform processes so simple that they could be mastered in a couple of days, and who, in any case of labor dispute, found it a not at all impossible thing to do to discharge all their employees and get in new ones.

No, the reason that men underpaid women was simply that they hated them. The natural man loves the women that are bound to him by the ties of love and affection; and he hates all other women. There were enough of him to set the standard in industrial employment. The employer who had corrected this savage disposition by culture soon found himself unable to compete with rivals who at the same time saved money and gratified their sadism by underpaying female labor. The condition was general, and every woman of any degree of intelligence knew perfectly well what she was up against. I knew that when I faced the world on leaving school just before the war, I was abundantly conscious that however valuable my labor might be I was going to have to fight for any just reward for it with employers who were going to show twice the resistance to my demands that they would have shown to them if they had been made by a man. Fortunately there came a cessation of this state of affairs in the war. The instinct towards sex-antagonism had to give place to the instinct of self-preservation. When the nation needed first-rate work and long hours were required, starved labor was no use; so starvation wages were no longer paid. The forward-looking woman of the time brought political power for their sex, and there has been no return to the previous conditions.

But if you do not believe me when I say that the feeling of sex-hatred was there, go to some department of life on which the war had no influence: say the law. The other day a policeman, either inflamed by thoughts of the class-war, or merely moved by an unholy sense of fun, chose to arrest on a charge of indecency a highly respectable political journalist of late middle age and a young girl, a friend of his wife and daughter, who had gone into Hyde Park on a warm evening and sat down for a few moments on chairs under the trees. When in the course of the trial, which took place after a week during which scandal and sniggering accumulated like a snowball, a doctor was called to give evidence proving the girl's virginity, the court was cleared of all women. This was an act of the grossest cruelty to the girl, a conventionally-bred young person just out of her teens; and it was an act of such stupid impertinence to the girl's mother and the politician's wife that I wonder that they did not box the ears of the policeman who told them to go. Now there could be no excuse whatsoever for this action. It could not be justified on the plea of modesty, since, if the magistrate and the court officials and lawyers had been able to get on with their duties without embarrassment in the presence of females when what they were considering was a tale of unseemly intertwining in open glades, it seems highly

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unlikely that shame would incapacitate them when a doctor came to make the thing as austere as a matter of tonsils with scientific verbiage. It was simply a demonstration of hostility, a gesture of contempt. The magistrate said in effect: "I am afraid of sex, it seems to me an unclean thing. Women are the cause of sex, the exciting object of its functions. Therefore I am going to bundle you out of my court though all humane considerations demand that you should be left there, because dirt has no rights". And the old-time employer said practically the same thing. He did not wish to feed the forces of uncleanness.

Now women feel this so acutely—as you will learn from any woman worker caught in this anti-feminist trap, who in her reminiscences will allude, for example, to the foreman as a flagellating force, which a man worker will rarely do—that whether they realize it in intellectual terms or not it is bound to have an effect on the attitude of their sex to the abstract thought that rationalized their employers' attitude to them. A year or two ago I went with Miss Fannie Hurst over to Passaic when the strike was on, and received considerable enlightenment at the hands of a weeping Polish mill-worker. She, poor woman, was the mother of eight children and was expecting a ninth, but that was not why she was weeping. Like many more women than is generally admitted she liked having children. She was weeping because of a growing perplexity. It had apparently struck her as a little ungracious that the world should pay her husband a wage wholly insufficient for the support of her family when it had said nothing against the marriage; but that could be got round. The way she had got round it was by taking out her magnificent carcass after it had looked after the home and children all day and setting it to work on the night-shift at the mill. She had been a little puzzled when the wages had been reduced so that she and her husband could no longer support their family that way, and it became her duty to starve. But what had utterly overthrown her reason, and had left her staring at a universe given over to disorder, was a visit from some zealous person sympathetic with the strikers who had condoled with her on the size of her family and the approaching arrival of a new baby and had urged on her that it was her duty to herself and her children to practise birth-control. Idiotically and unanswerably she sobbed that she could not see why she should not have babies, that she loved her husband and her children, that she had always been told that it was right for a married woman to have children, that she did not see how the world would go on unless they did, and what about the Virgin Mary? She was stupid as a cow, and several degrees smarter than civilization. I cannot help thinking that if she wriggles out of the pit into which she has fallen into a happier part of the United States and gets her daughters and grand-daughters into positions where they come into contact with modern culture she will radiate such an attitude of suspicion towards men's abstract thought that it will infect them also. From their earliest days they will have impressed on them that Economics and Politics are fantasies that at times run counter to reality as it is known to women, and rarely aid it.

This attitude on the part of women is not a mere personal resentment which they ought to sink for the sake of the general good. For the factor in man which makes him treat women fantastically badly, paying them starvation wages when it is obviously bad policy to starve the breeders of the nation, urging women to embark on the career of motherhood and making but the slenderest provision for them when they have done so, is the same factor that invalidates all his Utopias. The author of every Utopia writes on the assumption that man is governed by the will to live. Mr. Shaw's ideal Communism, as he outlines it in this volume, depends for its existence on the continual operation of that will in all the citizens of his imagined state.

But women know from their own experience that men are not governed by the will to live in their social activities. Their reluctance to frame society so that women can carry out successfully their function of motherhood and to take any steps in that direction save in countries where women are

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politically powerful is a convincing proof of it. It would seem much more likely that man is in a perpetual state of internal warfare between the will to live and the will to die, the latter being just as useful to him as the former, since it is as universally his duty to die as it is to live. But the duty to live being relatively pleasant he sets himself wholeheartedly to realize the will to live in his personal life; whereas he does all sorts of strange things to push his sense that some day he has got to die well to the back of his mind. There it undergoes various odd conversions: becoming very often—and if there is any more plausible explanation for the present disordered state of the world I do not know it—a resolution that society shall proceed along a line leading to his immediate profit and to the ultimate destruction of all.

I submit that women are not given to this disastrous process, being themselves committed to the service of the will to live by their child-bearing functions, and being forced to keep the will to die the personal matter it ought to be by the number of times they have to face death in the exercise of them. And I submit that their lively consciousness of it in men is enough to make them look at Economics as a whole, and even at Mr. Shaw's spirited and lovable volume, with no brightening of the eye. There seems to be no inherent reason why both Capitalism and Socialism should not be perfectly satisfactory systems—if the persons who live in them are actuated by the will to live. There seems to be no inherent reason why both Capitalism and Socialism should not be catastrophically unsatisfactory systems—if the persons who live in them are actuated by the will to die.

I hope that the intelligent woman will read Mr. Shaw's volume. She needs it as a help to watch her interests in the everyday world. The chapter on "Oligarchy", for example, will teach her how necessary it is that she should not join in the parrot-yammering against democracy that is the fashion today. But you must not expect her to take it as seriously as men would take such a volume. She knows that so far as a guide to peace upon earth is concerned Mr. Shaw has done better than this in his plays, which clear up the terrestrial situation as no suggestions for material arrangements can do, by revealing what is within the hearts of men, what compound of angelhood and jackassery, and how it can be handled to make balm instead of poison.

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DETECTIVE FICTION

By Valentine Williams

THE "shocker" has definitely arrived. It was solemnly canonized in a recent leader in the London *Times,* which spoke of this class of fiction as being read "not only by the millions who dislike serious brainwork, but also by the hundreds who live for it but enjoy a relief from it".

These hundreds, as is widely known, embrace the best brains in every walk of modern life. They include, as I can testify from personal experience, Lord Balfour, Mr. Stanley Baldwin and the Head Master of Eton. It may be found more difficult to believe that the late President Wilson was one of the most enthusiastic and discriminating of "shocker" devotees.

The growing popularity of the "thriller" has induced many writers, who have made their mark in other walks of literature, to try their skill at this genus of tale. Their varying measure of success would seem to indicate that writing "shockers" is not altogether so easy as it looks. The "thriller" has attracted a most distinguished company of experimenters. John Masefield, for instance, temporarily forsook narrative verse to give us those vividly painted adventure tales "Sard Harker" and "Odtaa"; Hugh Walpole scared the old ladies of his cathedral closes into fits with the violence of his "Portrait of a Man With Red Hair"; E. C. Bentley spared time from leader-writing to perpetrate, in "Trent's Last Case", his solitary contribution to crime fiction and a masterpiece of its kind; G. K. Chesterton has followed the trend with his Father Brown series; while that polished playwright and beloved author of "When We Were Very Young", A. A. Milne, is likewise represented by a single effort, that excellent murder tale, "The Red House Mystery". I have always felt sure that Somerset Maugham has a magnificent mystery "thriller" in his sack; but so far he has refrained from writing or, at any rate, from publishing, it.

That writing "shockers" may be as exhilarating as reading them, and that not merely from the financial standpoint, is suggested not only by the stupendous increase in the output of this type of story, but also by the marked improvement in quality. Nowadays the manuscript of crime and mystery yarns submitted for publication reach so high a standard of construction and writing, a leading publisher was telling me recently, that, whereas the difficulty used to be to light upon a single likely story in the postbag, it is now a question of making a selection from a number of equally promising efforts.

A sharp distinction must be drawn between the two main divisions into which the "shocker" or "thriller" falls, in order to differentiate the detective story proper from the romance of adventure. People are prone to confound the two, lumping under the head of crime-fiction spy stories like "The Thirty-Nine Steps", or another which modesty forbids me to name, which are, of course, pure romance and have nothing to do with detective tales. The detective story is invariably a mystery story; not necessarily so the tale of derring-do. Again, the origins of the adventure story are as old as literature itself; while detective fiction, notwithstanding ingenious efforts to trace it back to the judgment of Solomon and the story of Susannah and the Elders in Holy Writ, is, comparatively speaking, a parvenu in letters, though its pedigree makes up in interest what it lacks in length.

In chronological order, the writers who have developed the detective story as we know it today are Vidocq, Poe, Gaboriau and Conan Doyle. If I omit Wilkie Collins from my list it is with no idea of belittling his enormous industry, rich imagination and superbly dramatic powers of characterization, but simply because I cannot find that he added anything to the technique of de-

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tective fiction, unless it were the rather wearisome device of telling the story in diary form. The real father of the detective novel was Gaboriau, who admittedly derived from Poe, who in his turn was inspired by Vidocq.

"The Memoirs of Vidocq", the French ex-convict and police spy, published in 1828, was the first notable work of fiction with a detective as hero. In this full-blooded and, probably, largely apocryphal record of the great Vidocq's adventures, first as a convict, then a police "nose" and ultimately as Chief of the Paris detective force, one may discern in embryo, as it were, the modern detective novel through the agency of certain rudimentary experiments in deductive processes for the elucidation of crime commingled with plenty of brisk action, suspense and thrills innumerable.

Vidocq's famous "Memoirs", which seem to have been in their way a best seller of the day, fathered a lusty progeny of crime fiction in France. Their author, on finally being dismissed from his post on suspicion of planning crimes in order to win merit by "detecting" them, turned lecturer and is heard of, in 1840, addressing crowded audiences at Ackerman's Rooms in Regent Street.

Edgar Allan Poe's brilliant short story, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", marked the appearance in fiction of the amateur detective. C. Auguste Dupin, who traced back the butchery of the rue Morgue to an infuriated man-ape, who located the hiding-place of the purloined letter and solved the mystery of poor Marie Roget, was, of course, like William Legrand in "The Gold Bug", Poe himself. Dupin was the ancestor of Monsieur Lecoq, of Sherlock Holmes, of Martin Hewitt, of Sexton Blake and a score of, nay, a hundred, others.

Literary France of the Second Empire went wild about "Tales of Mystery & Imagination" which appeared, in 1856, in an elegant French translation by Charles Baudelaire, the poet. *Histoires étranges* created a deep impression, and inspired a poor devil named Emile Gaboriau, who had risen from writing doggerel verse for pastry-cooks to be amanuensis and literary hack to Paul Henri Féval, author of *Les Mystères de Londres, Le Bossu* and a round hundred of other sensational novels, with the idea of one day producing a series of crime studies, similar to Poe's, under the general heading of "Processes of Reasoning in Crime Cases".

In due course Gaboriau realized his dream. The first of his five famous murder stories, in which Monsieur Lecoq, his great detective, appeared, *L'Affaire Lerouge,* Gaboriau sold for a song to a newspaper called *Le Pays. L'Affaire Lerouge* was published and passed unheeded. Then a moribund journal, *Le Soleil,* acquired what we should call the second serial rights. With the very first instalment the story scored a triumph.

Book publication followed. But Dentu, the popular publisher of the Palais Royal, had no intention of bewildering his rather low-brow readers with any such clumsy subtitle as "Processes of Reasoning in Crime Cases". He invented the label *roman judiciaire* for the Gaboriau books—and the detective novel was born.

Fifty-four years ago Gaboriau died. He was only thirty-nine. He was the victim of years of overwork at the very moment when, for the first time in his life, he was at last earning enough to think of withdrawing from the daily grind and have leisure to show what was in him. His five great crime stories, written from day to day for newspaper serialization, with the printer's boy waiting in the hall, disclose many traces of haste. Editors would, arbitrarily, bid him introduce fresh "love interest", new thrills, into his closely-meshed plots and even, at need, change the very names of his principal characters.

But even the improbabilities and contradictions, the verbiage and padding, that are so common in Gaboriau's work cannot obscure the nimble ingenuity of his imagination and the mathematical and painstaking exactitude wherewith he works out his clues. In my opinion, the whole range of detective fiction cannot show the equal of Gaboriau's masterly short story *Le petit Vieux des Batignolles* or of the indescribably thrilling opening to *Monsieur Lecoq* where the young detective and his drunken companion, left on guard beside a corpse discovered at night in a low tavern on the outskirts of Paris, go forth into the snow groping for clues.

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The merit of Conan Doyle is to have achieved for his most celebrated hero what Wilkie Collins accomplished for his greatest villain, namely, to have made him interesting. Nobody remembers the plot of "The Woman In White", except for a hazy recollection of a female hypochondriac who flits about a graveyard; but who can forget Count Fosco, that fascinating conspirator? Sherlock Holmes, scrutinized in the cold light of reason, may prove to be preposterous; but to me, and all those of my generation, who watched him emerge, lean and mysterious, complete with "powerful lens" and deerstalker, hypodermic syringe and fiddle, from the pages of the old *Strand Magazine,* he is, and always will be, a living figure; and even to this doubting age he must be, I think, like Count Fosco, completely enthralling.

My personal feeling has always been that, of the two protagonists of the Holmes saga, the egregious Watson is the more brilliant creation. The genius of Doyle has stamped something so uncompromisingly into the moral make-up of this dull, good fellow that every reader unconsciously slips into the faithful doctor's skin and worships the great criminologist through his humble helper's eyes. Unlike poor Monsieur Lecoq, rigorously sat upon by a stupid and jealous superior, Holmes, the amateur, has nothing to lose. If we follow him in his investigations with such palpitating interest, therefore, it is not because we are afraid he may go astray, but because Sherlock, delightful fellow, always has a trick up his sleeve and all the time we are wondering what it is going to be. That is why, when Moriarty pushed Holmes over the precipice in Switzerland, we all rose up and howled our indignant amazement. We would not have Holmes get the worst of it: Holmes must not die; and, sure enough, in the end he came back to life.

This business of writing detective stories!

Those of you who have tried your hand at writing fiction will have discovered for yourselves—that is, if you are ever going to make good—that, in most cases, the difference between a good and a bad novel, technically speaking, lies in the construction. This is especially true of murder stories. It is obvious that detective fiction differs from other kinds of fiction in that, in a crime-story, the plot is of paramount importance. More than this, the handling of the different episodes, the working-up of the suspense, the gradual disclosure of the mystery, all these are factors by which the tale stands or falls.

Technique plays a very large part. It can, at need, in this sort of imaginative writing, replace characterization, as is shown by the success of many famous detective stories in which the characters are the merest lay figures. The ideal detective novel is, however, the one, like A. E. W. Mason's "At The Villa Rose", in which real, flesh-and-blood people move through a first-rate, exciting story.

But if one has to choose, it is the murder, rather than the murderer or the murdered, that must be the author's first care.

Just as no novel ever turns out as it was originally planned, so every novelist, at one stage or another of a story, knows what it is to be "stuck". Take it from me, there is no type of tale so apt to run to earth as the detective story. A matter of a few minutes in the time-table of the crime; the disposition of a window; the dress of a minor character; what at the outset appears to be the merest trifle may, as the plot unfolds, reveal itself as an insuperable obstacle in the smooth and natural progress to the final dénouement. A hitch of this kind, half-way through one of my books, compelled me, after more than a fortnight of miserable groping, to go back and practically rewrite the story from the beginning.

In such cases, when the yarn is ditched and he feels that all his ideas have deserted him, the novelist is tempted to summon to his aid our old friend, Coincidence. Let no man say that coincidences, which are a commonplace of everyday life, are permissible in fiction. If fiction is to measure itself against real life, then real life, so often sheerly incredible, being the much more interesting of the two, wins every time. Your murder story may permissibly be based on a coincidence such as an extraordinary resemblance or some hazard that draws a cer-

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tain group of people within the orbit of a crime; it must never sacrifice plausibility to chance.

Plausibility is the touchstone of good detective fiction. Plausible motives, plausible behavior, plausible people, will never fail to carry the reader with a rush through improbable situations. For instance, it is not plausible that a Cabinet Minister should try and steal the Crown jewels; but I can imagine quite a thrilling tale based on a plot of this description; provided that the Minister's character and motives were plausibly portrayed and the undertaking plausibly carried out.

Turning now to a personal theme, I have never managed to bring myself to believe sufficiently in any amateur crime investigator of my own imagining to introduce into my murder stories a super-sleuth other than a professional policeman. But that is because, since my childhood days, I have been saturated with C. Auguste Dupin, with Monsieur Lecoq and with Sherlock Holmes, and I do not want to create an amateur crime investigator until I feel satisfied in my own mind that he will not be, like so many of the amateur criminologists of contemporary literature, an amalgam of all three.

The two professional detectives who have appeared in my books are taken from real life. My study of Manderton, the Scotland Yard man of "The Orange Divan" and "The Eye In Attendance", is drawn, in character more than in appearance, from the late Chief-Inspector Mercer, of Vine Street, afterwards at Headquarters, a quite remarkable personality. In the same way Boulot, my ex-Chief of the *Sûreté*, who also figures in "The Orange Divan", is a blend of Monsieur Hamard, a famous head of the Paris detective force, who told me once that he had assisted at sixty-four executions, and Inspector Riboulet, a humble detective when I knew him before the war, who has since risen to fame by bringing Landru to the scaffold.

Planning murders and working them out backwards is great fun. But let no one who thinks of writing a detective story start out with the idea that it is anything but real hard work. Your crime tale seldom runs as smoothly in the writing as your psychological novel or your romance of adventure, if only for the reason that the detective, amateur or professional, is constantly disputing the stage with what novelists call "the love interest". The distribution of values in this respect is not the least of the author's difficulties.

But then hard writing, they say, makes easy reading, which may account for the ever-increasing vogue of detective fiction.

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CARICATURE

The Life and Death of Hans Stengel

By Marcus Goodrich

ON THE day, some years ago, when I joined the *New York Tribune's* dramatic staff, I began to suffer the symptoms of my first dose of dandruff. This engendered in me a curious repugnance amounting almost to minor panic; so I went out and had my head shaved. The second day found me miserably conscious of the hairless isolation I had driven myself into on the spur of the moment. And the grins and curious glances of the strange office, with which I was not yet even on greeting terms, made the prospect of the third day none too pleasant. However, the next morning I raised my head from the copy that was engrossing me to fasten my eyes on a pate as denuded and glistening as my own. Here was support. But in this case the head carried its nudity with the appropriateness that drifts about the top-hat of a man whose head had been shaped by just such hats for generations. Two thick brown eyes, sophisticatedly shielded behind squinting eye-lids, were bathing me in a curious survey that—I could not decide—was either jeering or delighted.

"I'm Stengel," he said courteously, after a second of waiting for me to say something, as if he had wanted first to see whether this was to be a defensive or an aggressive relationship.

I stood up to shake hands and look him over.

His more than six feet of arrogant height began with a pair of long, pointed, black shoes, and ended above a long, accipitral nose, with that Prussian expanse of bare skull. But that was more like a sort of distorted halo. My first impression was that "here is a noble creature". And I still believe he was, even though on tenth or eleventh inspection the fine, stark lines of his features had betrayed themselves to be a trifle blurred with curious warmths and weaknesses. I knew the type—that he almost was—well. I had seen them lying in fierce, gray knots on the ground, their shaven, Teutonic heads, dulled by dirt and death, pointed stubbornly towards the Allied lines.

II

It was in a way natural, of course, that Stengel and I should strike up a close association, for he was the dramatic section's caricaturist while I was its assistant editor. The office said: "The reason Stengel and Goodrich have got together is because they are brothers in baldness. They've formed a mutual protective association".

No doubt there was a grain of truth in this, but the foundation of our irrefrangible friendship was compounded of much more interesting materials. I have not even yet abstracted and identified all of them, yet some were clear to me from the beginning. In the first place, I admired him extremely: his responsiveness to the aristocratic sense of life, the swirling, flashing brilliance of his never tired wit, the rare propensity to ascend closer still to the perfection of his ostensible type under a heavy load of drink, and the remarkable, trenchant manœuvring of his critical soul within the limits of his chosen medium of expression: all these drew my admiration. He had an affect on me something like that produced by the mysterious little pellets which, dropped into grape-juice, transmute it into rich and heady wine.

The exact things in me, outside of my admiration for him, that attracted and held him through a period covering about one-fifth of my life-time are much harder to uncover. Only two of these things are wholly clear: the fact that my instincts launched the same arrows at the same targets on certain fields of being, and an idea of his, by which he set great store, that I was of what he called

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"good family". Then, too, I seem to have been the first American, in those days right after the war, who did not treat him as if he were a sort of cured leper; for he was a notorious German.

His mother's family was French, and he himself had been born in the United States; but his actor-father and his education were German, and it was in Germany that he had spent nearly all his thirty-two years except the first one of his life, the last two of the war and those immediately preceding his death.

He had served in the German Army against the Allies. He had been sent to the United States when it was seen that they would enter the war. He had attempted to further the cause of Germany here, and subsequently had been thrown into an internment camp as a spy. He never once denied to me that his arrest had been just; and though he laughed at the capers his captors had cut around him, he admitted that these often had been concerned with unusual kindnesses towards him. He dismissed my protests against his ungracious rapier thrusts at them by saying: "A man is never so ridiculous as when he is striving to do a purely ideal act of kindness".

But Stengel performed innumerable of these "purely ideal acts of kindness". He was a gentle, sentimental, glamorous youth, gregarious in the extreme and passionately devoted to the ancient virtues and everything German; and yet it would be hard for any but a few of his four or five friends and ten thousand acquaintances to believe that he was not a hard, calculating, disillusioned man, dexterous at insult, sure of victory, reckless of human association and steeped in jaded cosmopolitanism. How he jeered and lampooned the Sancho Panzas who lurched around believing they were Don Quixotes! But it was the many mortal wounds he, himself, received on the blades of formidable windmills that finally laid him low.

III

I have never heard of a man who knew and was known by so many people. Actors, generals, stock-brokers, policemen, doctors, waiters, painters, writers, book-binders and females of every description flocked about him. He used to receive them all every Saturday night in his amusingly furnished but over-lighted studio. He hated the dark.

These affairs were brilliant riots, and soon ranked among the more famous weekly parties of the city. In their algebraic sum, they were more nearly the mythical Latin Quarter that Greenwich Village thinks it is imitating than anything I have ever seen in the Latin Quarter. Astride of these gatherings like a playful satyr, with a gay but histrionic sneer on the mask that shielded a thrilled and sensitive youth, sat Stengel whipping up the throng with the sparkling lash of his incomparable wit.

Yet in a curious way, he was not the most important thing within the mechanics of these parties. He, of course, was their most important ingredient; but there was one thing, although it did not enter into them or identify itself with them, that made them what they were just as surely as a catalytic agent brings about a chemical reaction without entering into the composition. This thing was Stengel's wife, Leni.

Like a dark, demure blossom, she sat, a trifle passive, in quiet corners and gazed out over Stengel's guests with the utmost good humor. Sometimes she sang a little German song, sometimes, even with the lions of the day roaring at each other from the four corners of the room, she sewed on some homely, familiar thing. Most other parties in the Village were mere gaudy, gin-soaked disorders; Leni made these ebullient Saturday nights *gemütlich,* affecting them somewhat as the form restricts a wild sonneteer.

And what Leni did for those parties, she did for Stengel's life. Her own life with him was not easy, for he had all the traditional Continental ideas about women. Cæsar's submissive wife must be above suspicion, but Cæsar himself must be suspected of untold deviltry, recklessness and masculine domination. She kept Stengel's house in fine shape. His socks were darned, his buttons were always on, and his opinion that he was a fine gentleman fired by more than a touch of genius, living with his honest and handsome frau, was maintained trim and

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taut. Stengel loved her with considerable unconsciousness then; but finally, after she left him, the realized depth of his love for her terrified the individual in him, as with the terror of a man who stands tottering over an abyss in which, if it should pull him in, he would be forever lost.

IV

Stengel's very intimate friends were few, although those who felt that they, alone, were the only ones who really knew him were legion. Each one of these few intimate friends he not only dramatized as he dramatized himself, but he also made of each a passionately harbored legend. In this way he tried to make of life a glorious adventure through which he surged surrounded by splendid cohorts: Wylie was a great genius wielding a magic pen, Poselt was a charming literary Teuton of fine decadent spirituality, Goodrich was a scion of some impressive Puritan aristocracy turned artist, and Shepard, the friend of most practicable assistance to him, was the "descendant of an ancient Tartar tyrant" bending big business to his devices. It happened that the really celebrated people whom he knew were neither intimates nor "cohorts" in the sense I mean.

With all these friends he quarrelled violently on occasion, and, in the short throes of his rage, he would try to tear down in his own mind the coruscant idol he had been at so much pains to rear there. Those who really knew him would no more have thought of encouraging him in one of those bursts of iconoclasm than a sensible person would think of agreeing with a mother's denunciation of one of her own children. I have seen him sever himself from each of these friends "forever", and then have witnessed his almost panic-stricken flight back within the pale of their reflected Stengel-made glory.

In my own case I am not sure of the means by which he elevated me to the position I held in his mirage. Just on the bare facts I am nowhere near the personage he insisted I was to his friends from Germany, to me and to himself. Such few facts about me as he might have used to fabricate the image that he raised did not come into his possession until after he had reared the myth.

On the occasion of his first rage against me, he went about the business of tearing Goodrich down with characteristic German thoroughness. I sat tight in my apartment and let him bang away. I knew I'd get a telephone-call sooner or later that would inquire in the most hearty innocence: "Why haven't you been down to see me?"

I got the call on the evening of the day Stengel had met a man who had known my father. Under questioning this man had told him a raft of stuff such as that one of my ancestors had arrived in Virginia before the Mayflower reached New England, that another had been Bacon's Lieutenant-Colonel in Bacon's Rebellion, and that a kinsman had been killed in the Battle of the Alamo. I had, of course, known these things myself; but it had not occurred to me to tell them to Stengel because I was interested just then in little else besides becoming a dramatic critic. But Stengel was enthusiastic over this news. He took it to heart, paradoxically, as if he had just been anointed in the Great Corroboration. The image was set up again with a new coat of gilt. I "must come down at once". It was not that Stengel was a snob in the indecent sense. This sort of thing was part and parcel of the glorification of his own particular universe. Also it partook of something indicated by one of his most frequent remarks: "You can't get anything but a bad impression of this country because you are always surrounded by self-made celebrities and newly arisen guttersnipes denouncing the ladder up which they climbed. The people of good family you never have a chance to meet".

When I got down to his rooms, he and an elderly German painter were alone there. Leni was out visiting her father. Pipes and tobacco were clustered on the long, medieval table. A fire blazed in the field-stone fireplace. Stengel was emotional with wine and friendship. We drank. Stengel made a brilliant oration on friendship. We drank. Stengel delivered a thrilling encomium on the mythical Goodrich. We drank. Stengel burst into tears. We were drunk.

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Stengel suddenly leapt to his feet, clicked his heels together, bowed a trifle unsteadily and "publicly" denounced his perfidy in having belittled my "birth and position". I believe I said that I did not know that he had. But that did not appease him. He insisted that I should have satisfaction. The old painter nodded drunkenly, swaying against the huge table. I arose to my feet dizzily. A sudden, hot determination to play up to Stengel inundated me. He took down two swords from over the fireplace. He handed me one of the broad, heavy weapons, gripped the other and backed away. His sword held in a curious manner at about the level of his head, he waited for me. I imitated his position. Through a heaving, distorting mist I could barely make him out: a towering knightly figure beneath a levelled sword. The weapons clanked together. An instant, and my finger was laid open to the bone. I shifted the sword to my left hand. Stengel punctiliously changed his sword hand also. A finger of my left hand received a slash. He paused. He gazed from one of my bloody hands to the other. The "military" melted out of his figure. The show was over. We went back to the bottle.

V

Stengel had an education that seemed, at first impression, to be founded on erudition, but which in reality was tenuous, spectacular and superficial; and like most women, Latins and graphic artists, he attached paramount significance to, and made his interpretations by, the lyrical, skin-deep surface of things. But to prove the authenticity of this lyric attitude towards life, the brief-holder could do far worse than to offer Stengel's work in evidence.

Isolated on plain, white paper, a free ink-line by Stengel was obtrusive with significant personality. As the lines build up into patterns, they engender an inter-illumination out of all proportion to their apparent scope and effort. What language tries to do with such words as *excoriate, scorch, seize, slash, bite, rip, rend, crack* and *corrode,* Stengel does with simple, unmitigated line. While his much more "successful" fellows were filling the fashionable magazines and newspapers with Sunday Comic Section stuff dressed up, for fake intellectuals, in "three dimensional trickery", Stengel was remaining a veritable artist.

In portraying both type and character Stengel's art seldom fails. If the work represents a type, although it is instantly recognizable it is in addition an interesting characterization. If it be a character study, the mordant criticism of the caricature allots it ineluctably to its significant type. The reams and reams of panegyric, ridicule and portrayal of the career and person of David Belasco, were it boiled free of all dross and irrelevancy down to its meaningful essence, would seem like a bleary gesture in comparison with Stengel's ten-by-twelve satire on Belasco and what he represents. It is a horse laugh in fine and elegant manœuvres between paired points. It is a linear sigh of appreciation, as well as a whip-lash writhed to the purpose of cutting away the verdigris from the copper. It is, besides being "Belasco", a notable drawing.

This caricature was executed in the old days when Stengel was sure of, and admired, himself. Therefore it is interesting to notice that what Stengel treats with good humor in it is what he suspected he had in common with Belasco. And this is true also of his compact little café and street scenes. Stengel is in all of them: a smiling man, steeped, as if against his will, in an uncertain, droll lasciviousness, accosted here by a curiously slim and miserable street-walker, wheedled there by some formidable, loose-hipped female. It does not seem so much that Stengel hated women as that he feared and resented them. In the finest of his work, a series illustrating the exploits of some mythical, German sailor—a great, admirable, burly bully who ignores women, intimidates policemen, drinks saloons dry, throws money around, plays with the birds of the sky and arouses everybody's amusement—Stengel fairly makes his character leap off the paper; a kind of minor, pictorial link between Don Quixote and the Hairy Ape. Perhaps it is sufficient to say that in the files of a number of New York periodicals there is entombed the evidence that our own gen-

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"A mythical, rough-neck, German sailor" –by HANS STENGEL.
(Courtesy of Marcus Goodrich)

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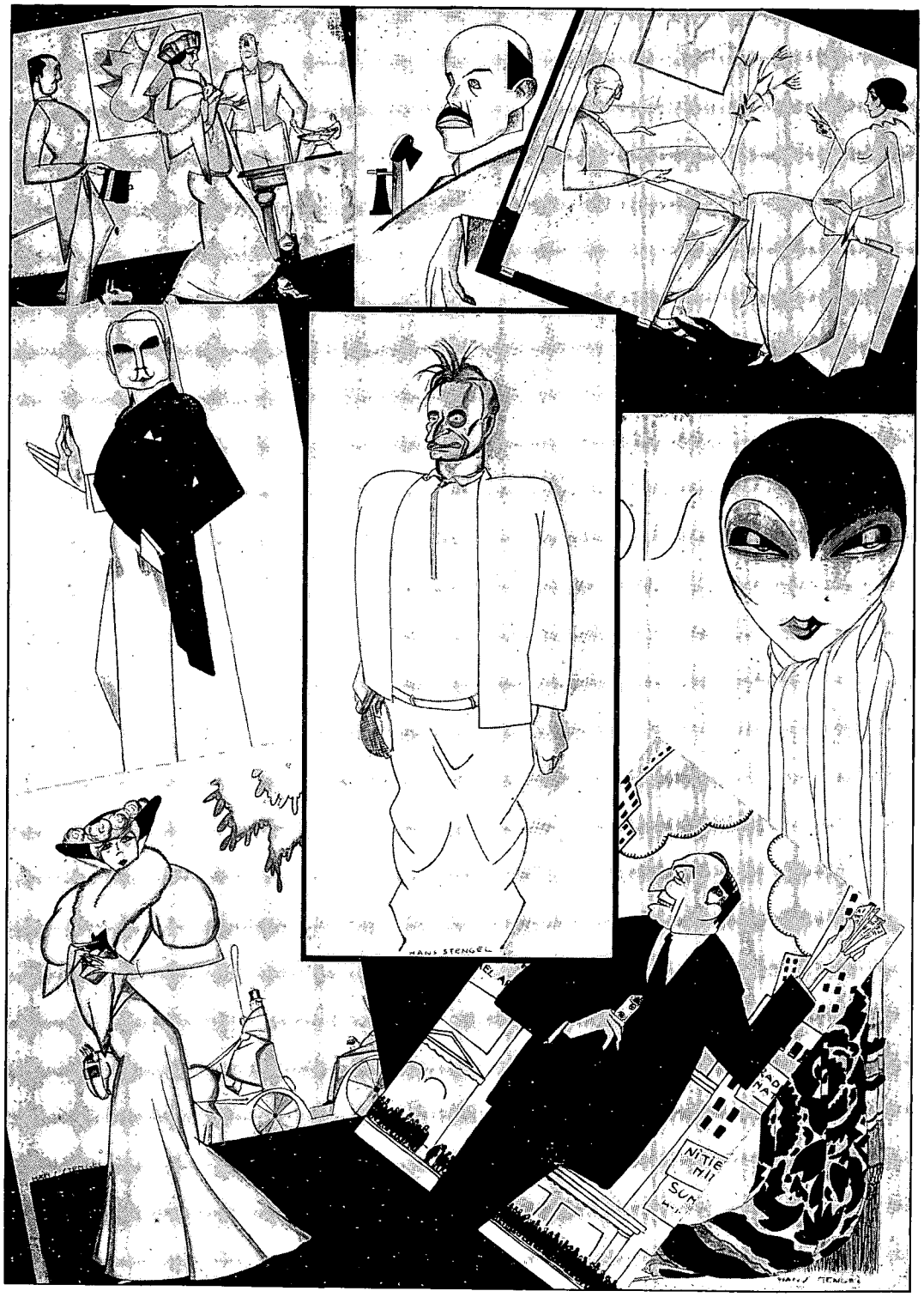

From collections of the work of Hans Stengel in the possession of Marcus Goodrich, Franklin Spier and the publishers of "The New Yorker".

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eration may have witnessed the rise and fall of a Voltaire of the contour, a Jonathan Swift of the line.

VI

All this, then, was the Stengel I left when I sailed for Europe. When I returned, some three years later, he was living alone in a new apartment, receiving a larger and different crowd of people, who seemed to spend their time flattering him and envying his strenuous "wandering over the crooked hills of delicious pleasure". But I saw at once that there was something dreadfully wrong with Stengel.

He was drunk, now, nearly every night; curiously drunk. The buoyancy, the inspiration that formerly he seemed to have got from drink were now displaced by a sort of sultriness, and the aforetime thrilling play of his wit had given way to a lunging epigrammatic savagery that grew more and cumbersome as the days went by. His Saturday nights had become sordid brawls. He would place a huge crock on a table in the center of his living room, fill it one-third full of straight alcohol and complete it with fruit juice. Then he would open his door and the riff-raff of the city would pour in: up-town slummers, Greenwich Village vagrants and that inadmirable swarm that hovers about the fringe of the artistic world as the Parasites used to do about the Roman banquet circle. Such filth as they splashed at each other! Such stupidity! Some would break chairs. Others would become frantic with sterile vulgarity and rip their own clothes off. Occasionally, Stengel would arise, as if out of a psychic coma, and throw a man down-stairs. Once I saw him go mad and tell this ulcerous gathering in a drunken, feverish voice what I knew to be part of the very foundation of his whole miserable situation. There was a moment of silence. Then everybody tittered in embarrassment, tentatively—but not too loudly, for they all were afraid of Stengel's reputation for getting violent.

When I denounced Stengel for these parties he said that the difference I complained of between the new party and the old was due to the fact that at the old ones I had been drunk myself, while at the new ones I sat cold sober, "gazing at the drinkers like a fanatical spectator". But this was only partly true, for at the old parties we used to drink slowly out of elegant little glasses stuff that was not mere camouflaged poison administered for the purpose of getting quickly drunk. And at the old parties there were such people as Ernest Boyd, Theodore Dreiser, Burton Rascoe and Ralph Renaud.

But it was in Stengel's work that I saw the most impressive difference. His work now, his real work, was concerned almost exclusively with living death, despair, failure, madness. What he held up for me to laugh at made me catch my breath. One of these things was a caricature of a well known, aging Village poet. For a second I thought it was intended to be Stengel. Then I perceived that Stengel, as usual, had perpetrated a gesture in vicarious autobiography; but whereas formerly those things in his caricatures that were himself had been droll, amusing, self-flattering, the autobiography in this drawing was insuperable. Mercilessly, terribly, the artist had excoriated himself, destroyed himself. The figure lay on the white paper like a dead demon. He said, "this is So-and-so", but I knew that it was Stengel. This is the most ghastly drawing I have ever seen.

VII

From the day he landed here as a young man looking for a job as a jewelry-designer to the day he died with a publisher clamoring for the novel he was writing, jobs and employers sought him out. But the jobs, like his money, went as easily as they came. His money went because he was excessively generous, a spendthrift. His jobs went through no fault of his own and for no such just reason. The first important position that he lost was that of caricaturist on the *Tribune*. He and I were discharged from there for exactly the same reason at the same time. This reason had nothing to do with incompetence or neglect of duty. To a nature such as Stengel's this kind of defeat

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came exceedingly hard. The first, faint nuance of bitterness crept into his attitude; for we had enjoyed success and liberty there under a sympathetic master. Free-lancing failed him, so he joined the staff of the *Telegraph*. First he was caricaturist, later he was dramatic critic. In one of the recurrent reorganizations of that paper, Stengel was finally eliminated. Then the *New Yorker* took him up. When that magazine in its early experiments to locate maximum circulation dropped Stengel, Hearst promptly received him on his evening paper at a salary larger than he had ever drawn before. But by an accident of local state politics, the heavy artillery that Hearst was mustering did not have to lay down its salvo, so Stengel had nothing to do. They kept paying him, but they made him fill in his miserable time by doing silly little drawings and verses. Finally the paper made him dramatic critic.

Stengel not only considered himself a powerful genius in the more profound depths of being, but a dramatic critic far surpassing in wit, experience and judgment any that flourished in the city. The appointment, with its new outlet and opportunity, almost rehabilitated him. I suspected that it was but a temporary arrangement, but I said nothing. Stengel was a man born for victory. He had had years of consistent and grinding defeat. I knew that just a little more defeat would literally destroy him. Here was victory, a victory particularly close to his heart and mind.

It seemed to me then that I could seize him on the upward bound and fasten him to a little hope and sanity that might hold him through the next crash. He moved into light, white, airy quarters. He took down the hot, neurotic posters that sickened his walls. He put ivy in his windows, and arranged flowery tea cups on one of the blue shelves of his book case. Soft, home-made Italian wine took the place of the raw alcohol—even though I persecuted him I could not get him on the wagon completely—and the Saturday night parties were replaced by small, pleasant suppers on Sunday evenings. A fraction of the old jovial Stengel began to re-emerge.

On one of these Sunday nights, a German history professor and an ex-German officer developed a discussion on the origin of races to such a pitch that finally they sprang at each other's throats. The struggle attendant upon separating the combatants so disturbed the other tenants of the building that they complained. Stengel was asked to move. In his hyper-sensitive condition he interpreted this as a further omen that the hand of Fate was against him. It was really difficult to ridicule and argue him out of this idea. But he moved again into still better quarters, taking even more pains to make them the dignified frame of a successful gentleman. Then the management of his paper without warning put another critic in his place.

VIII

There are a number of ancient maxims that I know to be sheer defensive twaddle, and among them are those which say that a man who talks about committing suicide never does it, and that there is no such thing as bad luck. I have known eight people who committed suicide, three in war and five in ordinary life. All of them threatened or talked about the deed before they performed it. I know of a man who walked along the sidewalk on a calm, sunny day. A brick, apparently jarred loose by the vibrations of the city, fell from a cornice and struck him. That arose out of circumstances beyond his control and in no reasonable way to be seen as having resulted from his moral or ethical life system. Therefore it disturbed me profoundly when Stengel began to talk about suicide; for I could not deny even to his face that I was impressed by the persistent panorama of his ill-luck and defeat. It may be true that the causes of his wreck can be traced partly to the system of navigation that he used, but in all my life I have never seen even a badly-run ship deluged by so many punishing storms, following each other so closely and driving their victim on so vicious a series of reefs. Stengel was now really, desperately beset.

He turned upon his environment with a fierce, roaring whine, and plied himself with destructive anodyne: for his burning consciousness of the disaster of life he took

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lethal quantities of gin; for the causative, irreparable loss of Leni he flung himself into the arms of a female multitude. He had been strikingly successful with all kinds of women, and more and more he had come to revivify his self-esteem by such triumphs. But he soon got so frantic, so clumsy, so hungry for mere victory of any kind, that the women whom he had dominated began to resist him successfully. His native dignity, like a corrupted skin, dropped from him. He reached the fantastic stage where, within six months, he proposed marriage to four—possibly six—women whom he knew only slightly.

I am sure that two or three of the women would have been good to him if he had stuck to them, and one might have saved him, for she loved him, if he had not driven her to distraction with the inescapable hint that she was only a poor substitute for Leni.

IX

Then Stengel developed a delusion of persecution. He believed, although he joked about it, that the Jews of the city had formed a combination against him because he was anti-Semitic, and furthermore that his inexplicable failures on the journals were due to organized professional jealousy and the stupidity of New York editors. The first of these dangerous ideas I pounded out of his mind; but with the last two I was not so successful because I half believed there was some truth in them.

This was the time, he felt, to get out of the country. He had been talking about it for a year. He bent every effort to raising the funds.

X

To Stengel, self-destruction was a more thinkable thing than it is to most people, because two members of his family had obtruded it on his consciousness. He had planned to end his novel with a suicide more puritanical and precise in its mechanics than *hara kiri*. In describing this ending, he said, as nearly as I can remember it:

"The suicide of a gentleman should be neat and painless, yet it should not be euthanasia. At no moment should the success of the operation be possible without the continued application of courage and determination on the part of the self-destroyer: nothing sudden, nothing from which he can not withdraw at any moment of its duration, nothing that will permit the suspicion that the business was impulsive, that the man did not really intend to do it. There must be nothing like jumping in front of a train from before which he could not escape if he subsequently lost his nerve, or a noisy hanging from which he could be cut down and revived, or which would be so undeliberate as not to require the maintenance of extreme valor.

"The hero goes into the bath-room. He looks into a long mirror, examines himself carefully and demands of his image there if he really is determined on the deed. He decides. He takes off his silk sporting belt. He enlarges the adjusting loop so that it will fit over his head. Watching in the glass, he pulls on the belt until he begins to strangle. He holds it firmly at that point until his face gets purple and the veins swell. Then he swings around, hooks the buckle of the belt on the hinge knob of the closet door, braces his back in the angle formed by the mirror and the wall, and maintains, with the weight of his body, just enough tension on the belt to keep the strangulation pressure. His hands must be kept at his sides so that there will be no suspicion of indecisive clutching at the belt in the final moments, and his weight must be borne by the wall-angle and his braced legs so that the frail belt will not break. As a concession to his nerves, he shall keep his pipe in his mouth to clench his jaws on."

XI

Perhaps only the confirmed drunkard who, by some revolution, has become a complete abstainer can summon sufficient perspective to evaluate that most monstrous manœuvre of the human consciousness, alcoholic depression. The spectacle of a man whom drink is destroying rushing frantically back into the tentacles of his destroyer from a moment of

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sobriety has little to do with appetite, but much to do with fear. The man sobers up. He feels as the days go by that his system is free of alcohol. Then a cold, seemingly pellucid logic settles on his mind. His mental vision seems preternaturally clear. Without a single warm shadow of doubt the equation of the universe appears to glisten before his eye: the man on one side and on the other fruitlessness and despair. A short time before his death Stengel sobered up and this cold depression chilled him to the heart.

Turning the icy searchlight of his new vision on his world, Stengel thought he saw that his art was futile, that he would never finish his novel, that all women had failed him, that people only *used* him for parties, that everything he touched from a game of chess up to dramatic criticism turned to defeated dust in his hands, that he was no splendid genius surging through life, that Wylie was only an advertising man who had written an unpublished novel, that Poselt was just a translator, that Goodrich was merely a Texan trying to write, that Shepard was nothing more that a petty business man.

It was while he was in this state that I sensed his fear of going back to Germany, a fear that to go there might be only to prove that he was fleeing from himself, a fear that his last and only hope was a self-delusion. I faced the fact then, yet only intellectually, that Stengel might destroy himself. If I had but had my emotions convinced also, been driven to panic, I might have played my trump card with more passion, swept all obstacles aside in a holocaust of tact and sensible consideration. But my diplomatic attempt to send Stengel and Leni off to Germany together only emphasized his ineluctable fate. This last life boat was wrecked on my failure to convey graphically enough to Leni "what was going on down there".

Had he managed to stay completely off liquor just a little longer he would have conquered at least the poisonous depression. But he began a fatal cycle of drinking and sobering up, with each round leaving him more and more spiritually frozen. And the vicious circle of his petty defeats multiplied like bacteria that he was watching through a powerful microscope.

A week before he died I went to his apartment for the specific purpose of getting his word of honor that he would not touch a drop of anything for a month. I took my wife with me. She and Stengel were very sympathetic. I wanted her there to take his part in case I, unrealizing, got to driving at him too hard. But he saw that I was determined. He made no witty evasion or defense of any kind. Everything I said about his drinking he admitted without question. There were a few seconds of silence after I demanded his word. During them the Prussian junker he describes in his novel dissolved from about him and the gentle youth whom he also describes there took possession. This being smiled at me with ineffable sweetness. Then he used a phrase that annihilated me, a phrase built around a word that affects me more powerfully than any other word in language, an insuperable word that permits Conrad to rear his most poignant peroration. Stengel said: "But, Marcus, I am so lonely, so lonely".

XII

On a Saturday night Stengel invited a group of acquaintances to his house. He drank but little. When questioned as to why he was so preoccupied, he said:

"I am drunk."

Shortly after this remark he arose, ritualistically lit a candle on either side of his mantelpiece, and turned out the brighter lights. He paused in the doorway leading toward the back of his apartment, surveyed his guests for a brief moment, bowed and said,

"Excuse me."

As he walked into his bath room, there was on his left, forming one wall, a full length mirror . . .

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THE MOVIES AND THE HIGHBROWS

By Montgomery Evans

OUR intelligentsia are very fond of criticizing the movies. William Allen White took a crack at them, H. L. Mencken periodically refers to the hopeless imbecility of Hollywood, and every young intellectual refers to them as made for twelve-year-old minds. Most of these criticisms as applied to the art-productions of former manufacturers of cloaks and suits are true; but I am inclined to place a definite responsibility for Hollywood's shortcomings on those who criticize it so readily.

"Abie's Irish Rose" is scarcely the ideal of our intellectual critics, nor do they regard the annual beauty parades of Messrs. Ziegfield and Carroll as lasting contributions to the drama. And though the theater of 1915 possessed some excellent actors the average play produced on Broadway at that time offered little intellectual food for the serious-minded. The intelligentsia recognized this scarcity of good plays and a few individuals began to write and produce plays for themselves. The contribution of the intellectuals to the stage became known as "the little theater movement", and has spread throughout the country.

Now what is the history of the little theater movement? A few young people started the Washington Square Players in New York, while almost simultaneously Eugene O'Neill, Susan Glaspell and George Cram Cook began to produce plays on an old wharf in Provincetown. Both groups produced the kind of play they themselves admired; some were written by themselves, others were selected from the work of foreign contemporaries. They made no attempt to appeal to Broadway audiences. They found, however, that there were many people who were hungry for this type of play. The Provincetown Playhouse and the Theater Guild became institutions. Their success and the active work of Sheldon Cheney, Kenneth MacGowan, Gilmore Brown, Sam Hume, Frederick Koch and others, led to the spread of little theaters throughout the country. *The Theater Arts Monthly* became the organ of hundreds of groups, all interested in the production of plays of a type different from those presented by the old line commercial producers.

The Theater Guild of New York now controls three theaters and is sending a company on the road this fall. Other groups in Chicago, Pasadena, Chapel Hill, Dallas and hundreds of other cities now own their own play-houses and present plays of the type selected by the Theater Guild. Their success in finding an audience for their productions might have been greater if they had chosen their plays with better judgment, for not every little theater has on its boards a Lawrence Langner, Theresa Helburn, Maurice Wertheim, or Helen Westley. Where the group is weak it is often subsidized, and its backers occasionally insist on plays of too "arty" a nature to appeal to a bored public even among the highbrows. Yet despite these handicaps and the taint of amateurism, the combined audiences of these scattered groups are very large.

One cannot doubt that the audience for intelligent films is much greater than that already created by little theater groups. Yet the intellectuals who wrote plays for little theaters have made no genuine effort to reform the movies in the same way; by working to classify film audiences and by writing and making pictures. They have stood by and let American producers muddle through with film-equivalents of "Abie's Irish Rose", at which the highbrows naturally throw bricks.

The intellectuals' answer to this accusation is simple: the motion-picture industry is a trust dominated by men interested only in dollars and headlines. This statement unfortunately contains a great deal of truth, but it is not quite fair to the movie mag-

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nates. Actually, none are more anxious to improve the movies than the people who make them. The Famous Players Company was formed because Mr. Zukor and Mr. Lasky thought that Sarah Bernhardt and Beerbohm Tree could repeat their stage successes on the screen. They discovered the fallacy of this reasoning and set about training their own actors in Hollywood and Long Island. Then a few foreign films were brought to this country, and though audiences devoted to inanities did not respond at all heartily to them the critics and highbrows lauded foreign actors. Hollywood immediately sent abroad and brought to America the best actors they could buy. The result still did not please the intellectual critics, who decided that American producers needed German directors. The producers meekly obeyed this new command, brought foreign directors to America and ruined most of them by giving them too much money and too few ideas. German cameramen used "camera angles", so the Masters of Hollywood issued an edict calling for a due sprinkling of trick photography wherever it could be nicely inserted in a picture.

None of these attempts to perfect American films has been entirely successful, yet the producers still follow every suggestion given them. They pay amazing salaries to intellectuals who are supposed merely to advise producers. The most striking instance of this was the action of Paramount in commissioning John Grierson to write ten articles for their official publication. Grierson is probably the soundest critic of the cinema today and his first article was largely devoted to praising the Russian film "Potemkin", and to comparing it with inferior American pictures. He has been allowed free range, even to the extent of assailing the psychology of red paint and gilt as essential decorations of movie houses. The motion picture industry is a trust, but the heads of that trust, whatever their background, have attempted to improve the films they produce.

They have improved their product. It is true that improvement was inevitable and it is also true that the improvement has been limited to the production of a few distinguished films. The program picture, which is produced at the rate of almost one a week by each of the three leading companies, has remained inferior. There are several reasons for this. One is the lack of either courage or originality on the part of those who prepare scripts and direct production. (An incident occurs to me: in one of the first war films a scene showed a hero drilling when a pretty girl passed. He turned to watch her while his company marched a few hundred miles. This scene, with the same overemphasis of the rather weak comedy value it possesses, has been used in six other program pictures which it has been my misfortune to see this season.) Types of hero and heroine are modelled on the successful actor; thus Valentino was responsible for a series of foreign lovers, while today *Americanus Boobensis,* or the common sap, is considered ideal for the leading rôle. Plots are modelled on some story which has proved popular. "The Big Parade" has led to a deluge of war films. Camera angles have been used with very little understanding of their significance, and abstractions and tempo are sure to be misused in the same way.

The original cause of this was the custom of buying titles of books or plays supposed to have publicity value and rewriting their plots by the insertion of incidents and situations which had been interesting in other films. This is best exemplified by the comedies, in which certain sequences have all the inevitability of the ultimate brick in a Krazy Kat cartoon. But here again the producers must be given credit for trying to reform; during the past year the demand for "originals", i.e. stories written expressly for the screen, has been greater than ever before. Stories of this type are written with a knowledge of what the motion-picture can portray best, and if the authors really possess cinematic minds the stories are likely to be infinitely superior to those based on plots which must be changed and distorted before reproduced on the screen. "The Big Parade" is an instance of extremely successful writing for the screen; and "The Rough Riders" is an instance of an "original" patched together from historical inci-

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dent and what the Hollywood artists consider appropriate comedy relief.

The scenarist, understood as one who professes to understand film-situations and comedy effects and to remodel plots to suit his formula for financial success, seems likely to exist forever, together with the punning "gag-writer". But the original writer must be the one who in addition to a superlative dramatic instinct possesses an exact knowledge of the technique of the camera. Von Stroheim and Chaplin are outstanding examples of this type of mind. It is hard to judge on the basis of a single picture, but it seems possible that Eisenstein, the director of "Potemkin", possesses a fuller genius, since in that picture he adds rhythmic values of tremendous beauty. We may require something of the composer in our film-Shakespeare, in addition to something of the cameraman, director, actor and playwright. Where else should we seek these qualities than among the intelligentsia?

Yet what have the intellectuals done? One man, Robert Wolf, has written an original story, "Loony", published in *The Nation*, which offered suggestions for a new technique. John Grierson and a few other critics have offered constructive criticism. Ben Hecht has studied the workings of Hollywood, written an original story, "Underworld", and forsaken the movies for the spoken drama, after seeing what Hollywood did to his story. Seymour Stern has tucked away in various small magazines a series of articles analyzing the theory of the cinema in admirable fashion. A group of amateurs in Orange, New Jersey, borrowed $10,000 and made an entirely amateur film which was shown in New York.

The amateur film offers possibilities to any intellectual who wishes to write and direct a film, as the Washington Square Players produced their plays. The cost need not be more than that of a legitimate play; the huge production costs of commercial companies are due to their top-heavy overhead and too-generous salaries. Amateurs are at it already and a magazine has been founded devoted to their plans. The only excuse left to our highbrows is that when the films are made they can find no theaters to show them.

This is unfortunately almost true. The custom of block booking recently discussed at length by independent exhibitors, was brought about by two factors: the desire of producers to insure outlet for productions planned but not yet produced, and the laziness of exhibitors anxious to solve the problem of selecting programs by signing their names on contracts with Paramount, Metro-Goldwyn or First National. It is likely to survive despite the recent Supreme Court order instructing Paramount to discontinue the practice, and it very definitely prevents independent producers from marketing their wares. Until recently it was possible for independents to produce short films with some prospect of arranging for distribution through one of the large companies; but the three dominating companies now plan the production of everything used in the theaters they control, from the feature to the news-reel. The instances of purchase of independent films and subsequent release throughout the country are very rare, and some of the best films bought or made by the big companies have never been given a fair try out.

One outstanding instance of this is enlightening, since it leads to an explanation of the psychology of the big producers. Robert J. Flaherty produced a film of Eskimo life, "Nanook of the North". This was distributed through Pathé and was very favorably received by the critics. Famous Players then commissioned Flaherty to make a film in the South Seas and sent him to Tahiti with equipment and funds to complete a film similar to his first production. The film "Moana" was completed and when shown to the executives of Famous Players it was praised by them as a beautiful picture. They decided, however, that it was not suitable for general distribution, and could not be released. Flaherty and his friends protested, and finally persuaded the Famous Players Corporation to try the film in six of the least responsive theaters they controlled. This was done, and though "Moana" was given only the publicity accorded a usual program picture, in every city it brought in more than the usual gate receipts. It was then released in the larger

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cities, but despite its good showing on tryouts no attempt has been made to obtain distribution throughout the country.

This policy, which is followed with almost all the really fine films produced or purchased by the large companies, is explained as due to the low average intelligence of small town audiences. Seventy-five percent of the income from every picture is supposed to come from the "sticks", towns of under 10,000 population; and it is impossible to produce films for the large cities only. The pictures which are praised by metropolitan critics do not appeal to the hicks, therefore the hicks are to be elected judges of what films shall be produced and generally shown.

In the first place this attitude is rather unjust to the hicks. It may be that in quiet communities films of adventure are more interesting than psychologocial studies, but it seems doubtful that all residents in small towns and cities are as stupid as the theater-owners who profess to select according to their tastes. The truth is that the exhibitor who owns or manages a small theater is usually a recent graduate from some very small business and all too often obtained his training in "showmanship" in a now defunct vaudeville house. Most of the small town theaters are former Grand Opera Houses or successors to Smith's Sparkling Variety Shows. The films produced by Hollywood have appealed to the existent audiences of these theaters and increased them mightily, for the poorest movie is usually superior to the former variety bills. But this process has actually consisted in a sorting out of a classified audience, interested in a certain type of film.

The idea of classification is excellent; but the practice of appealing to the boobs alone has been responsible for another classification which film-producers had not planned. A very large number of human beings who did like the average film have become movie-phobes. The movie-phobes include the several million American citizens who have been completely disillusioned and have decided that nothing artistic can come from Hollywood. Barnum psychology has been responsible for the phenomenal growth of the motion-picture industry, but it has at the same time alienated a huge public, whose quarters and half-dollars the American producers can no longer attract to the box-office by their extravagant publicity.

All these movie-phobes are potential supporters of good films. William Allen White was among the first to suggest special theaters for highbrows only. All our intellectuals need do is make the films and show them in their own theaters, and a new classified audience will stand in line at the box-office to get in. This last statement is no longer theoretical. The movement toward classification has already started and begun to spread.

It all began in 1925 with a few subscription showings in New York of unusual foreign films. Then the Cameo Theater was turned over to Mr. Symon Gould who instituted a repertory program and revived the best American and European pictures. The success of the Cameo and the subscription showings of the Film Associates persuaded Mr. Michael Mindlin to forsake the legitimate stage and take a lease on the Fifth Avenue Playhouse. He opened in October, 1926, with a revival of "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" which ran for five weeks, and followed it with such excellent pictures as "Polykushka" and "Crime and Punishment", produced by the Moscow Art Theater, "Tillers of the Soil", a French film, "The Epic of Mount Everest", "Shattered", "Secrets of the Soul", and Jannings revivals. Recently the Cameo has presented "The Gorilla Hunt", "Stark Love", and other distinguished films. Their success led to the building of another little theater appealing to the same movie-phobes, the Fifty-fifth Street Cinema, and to the introduction of the idea of a film little-theater movement in Cleveland, Chicago and other cities.

Two small theaters in Washington have prospered through adoption of a similar policy. Subscription-showings have been arranged in dozens of cities and plans have been made by several groups for a chain of little theaters in all the large cities. In every case these have been more successful than their backers dared hope, for movie-

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phobes have stood in line to see really fine films.

The American producers have not yet recognized the importance of this movement toward classification of the motion-picture audience. They are not interested in the modest returns offered by existent theaters of this type and their wasteful production methods prevent their making films expressly for critical audiences. If the highbrows really want good movies, and if they want to improve the quality of American Productions, the responsibility lies on them. The supply of excellent foreign films is not inexhaustible, and more and more European film companies are modifying their pictures to conform to the requirements of the Fanamet trust which buys films for America.

The theaters are being built; some one must make the films. Where are the men who are to produce these films in America?

They are writing articles on the stupidity of the motion-picture. They are wisecracking and leaving even the development of the little theater chains to men interested primarily in a new and exceedingly profitable phase of the motion-picture industry. These organizers of a little theater movement in the movies may be assumed to have the highest ideals imaginable, yet they require more than the attendance highbrows at their theaters. They need their ideas and the films which they can produce, as the Provincetown Theater produced its first plays. If the intellectual of America really wants fine motion pictures and if he has any ideas which he considers superior to the usual film themes, he should begin to work in the little theater movement. It's up to the highbrow!

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MR. BEER'S BACKDROPS

The Books of Thomas Beer, Including "The Road to Heaven"

By Margaret Whipple

NOVELISTS no doubt have their heaven on earth and need not wait to be dead and buried to know paradise. The heaven would be, I suppose, the novel which entirely satisfies its author, regardless of the degree of satisfaction which his public finds in it. How distressing, then, to see in the successive novels of Thomas Beer, each of which must represent a step toward his preconceived heaven, only the markers of a path which leads more directly to *our* idea of a novelist's purgatory. He is certainly one of the most accomplished writers in America today—urbane, polished, gracious. But with the publication of each volume of fiction he becomes less and less a novelist and more and more a skilled artisan. To create life for his readers is a subsidiary consideration; to display the mechanics and materialism of any social era defines itself as his purpose.

It is Mark Walling in "The Fair Rewards", Thomas Beer's first book, who stands out as the most human figure the author has so far created. In his work, his life, his love, he was a rampant sentimentalist, unashamed because unaware. But it is not until the publication of *The Road to Heaven* (Knopf, $2.50), six years later, that he is definitely crystallized in the minds of the readers of that first novel: "Walling's as decent a manager as there is in America. But . . . he doesn't care for the theater in the slightest. All he wants is to put on shows where his talent for scenery can have a good time". In the summing-up of the artistic exigencies of his one living character, Thomas Beer has also given us the precipitate of his own diverse artistry. Three slight changes (Beer for Walling, novelist for manager, and novel for theater) make that description as perfect a critical estimate of Mr. Beer as anyone is apt to conceive for some time to come. He writes novels, not because he is interested in human realities or in the existence of actual or imagined persons or in any other phase of life in which most novelists find their inspiration, but quite simply because the novel is the nicest possible way by which his "talent for scenery", as it was so beautifully and wholly evidenced in "The Mauve Decade", can be shown off.

It is essential to observe at once that the scenery of Mr. Beer is not simply a verbal re-creation of the places in which the action occurs. It is, in general, everything *but* the action. It is the people who are to support the slim thread of plot, the social conditions which have made the people what they are, and the places in which they dwell, either actually or in their thoughts; ". . . but he won't know whether the orchestra's playing properly, and he'll pick faces rather than voices." He becomes so absorbed, so hypnotized, by the fascinating possibilities and shifts in scenery, that he forgets the necessity of making the characters speak the lines that would advance the story; negates, for the sake of an unusual detail or lighting effect, the principle of selection which makes a novel whole; and permits his characters, because he admires their individuality, to smash his formulated plots to bits and run away with the pieces, no one knows whither. The result is a series of novels which cannot be too highly praised and appreciated for the keenness and delicacy of their ornamentation. Their characters are charming, although never vigorous, portraits, and the actual writing of them is a marvel of "right" words and brilliantly pictorial passages. But their only solidarity is in the struggle of the author to maintain his sense of plot in the face of an incorrigible tendency to regard setting as the only importance of any written work.

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"The Fair Rewards", published in 1922, was written, I imagine, to point the ironical implications of the phrase from which the title derives: "These be the fair rewards of those who love". Mark Walling, once matinée idol, now theatrical manager, is its delightful, sentimental protagonist. He loves Broadway, which is kind to him; he loves his wife, who is unfaithful to him; he loves John Carlson, who dies before he can see Mark's greatest triumph; he adores his two adopted children, one of whom betrays his personal integrity, while the other's devotion is more than man should ask and certainly more than he commonly gets. In this novel Mr. Beer's insatiable penchant for setting is taken out in the building of characters rather than scenes. They are suggested as persons who could, with amusement and felicity, be included in one's own circle of acquaintances; the persons whose conversation at dinner is listened to and enjoyed, whose clothes and manner are enviable. But their inner realities are completely obscured, and we must simply put our trust in Mr. Beer and believe that he knows them sufficiently to be responsible for their acts. It is in these persons, whose motivations the reader never comprehends, that the fate of the title's implications rests. Plainly, it was Mr. Beer's intention to satirize the inevitable failure of man, woman, or fate to fulfill the obligations imposed by any human being's affection. Unfortunately, at least half the persons and fates in whom Mark Walling puts his confidence remain more than worthy of his regard, and if the author did not insert in the most obvious places that quotation from which the title was taken, the book would be entirely lacking in any plot interest, although it would still remain a piece of coincidental writing of immense interest in itself. The sad fact is that his absorption in his characters' personalities made of the plot any old thing on which to drape the author's real interest, and, except for those few untimely recurrences to the title, he let the plot go where it would—or not at all.

It is, paradoxically enough, in "Stephen Crane," published in 1923, that Mr. Beer has most nearly approached what should be his novelist's heaven. In its manner of treatment, its deftness of touch, its method of exposition, the volume is identical with those books known as Mr. Beer's novels. But in the correlation of its characters and events into a comprehensible unity, it becomes much more a novel than any of those volumes which have been so labelled. Strangely enough to most of us who are heartily sick of those distorted biographies that read like a novel, "Stephen Crane" reads like a novel because it is written strictly in accordance with the facts, not because it is an embroidery more or less around the facts. If Mr. Beer had imagined Stephen Crane, with no actual incidents of his life to stick to, I do not doubt that Crane would come as alive as he does in the volume, but I do seriously doubt that he would have done anything in keeping with his life as it was. Happily, men and lives and biographies being what they are, Mr. Beer has had to dovetail his character and his plot. Under the restriction, he has, ironically, written a novel. However, his preoccupation with setting has left its mark here, too: Stephen Crane lives for the reader with immense personal being and gusto as long as the printed page is there; but when the book is finished there is taken away only an intimate sense of a gay figure "on the frosty highways around Hartwood", a sardonic figure against "walls . . . the colour of fresh sumach on the hills", an irresponsible figure "rolling dice with strange adjurations on the hall's depressed floor", a wistful figure whose "blue eyes roved to a sail that fled above grey water outside the window", a silent figure unwakened "by the little dog's vain howling in the dark".

"Sandoval", in 1924, was a return to the novel, but this was to be a novel with a definite plot: the attempt of a Southern gentleman who took "his vanity into the North upon a business"—the business of blackmailing a New York family who had risen to "elegant and commodious" prominence during the Civil War. M. Christian Coty de Sandoval comes out of New Orleans to tell New York that he is an aristocrat and that the house of Gaar laid its fortune on the stolen moneys of himself and other aris-

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crats. But nothing happens. He takes himself off by accidental suicide before there can be anything lurid in Mr. Beer's pages, and the plot stands out once more as the peg on which to suspend the author's peculiar genius—the setting into which he can fit the glimmering jewel of a sometime fashionable New York, the people, the society, and the amusements of which are alike to him merely decorative phases of an era.

In "The Road to Heaven", published this year, is the cumulation, almost the crystallization, of the qualities which have distinguished his early work from that of his contemporaries. It is a story of Lamon Coe, a man whose being emanates from the soil but who is deprived of that birthright and forced into an ultra-civilized life. By the sheer machinations of time and circumstance, he is finally freed from its stifling charm and returned to his natural environment. Included in the circumstances are Abner Coe, a sensitive, almost neurotic, *littérateur,* whose eventual death is the ironic culmination of a sustained refusal to accept the fullness of life, and Frankie De Lima, a forthright, beautiful, vital creature, whose knowledge of the evils and sordidness of life has never overshadowed her love of it, and who dies as she had lived—in happy ignorance of the circumstances surrounding her acts.

Now let us quote from the jacket: "This is the story of Lamon Coe who knew what he wanted had no value but still wanted it, of Abner Coe, who wanted nothing, and of Frankie De Lima, who always got more or less what she wanted, and liked it. It is a study of characters, accidentally American, who have always existed, as they exist in New York of the year 1926". I do not insert this description because I wish to pick a quarrel with the publisher's copywriters, whose stupidity in such matters is too often overrated. I cite it *in toto* because I do not for one minute doubt that the copy came from anyone but Mr. Beer, both because in manner it is his own, and because it corroborates the internal evidence of the other novels—the evidence which illustrates the astonishing disparity between Mr. Beer's original conception of his novels and their ultimate content and implication.

It is once more an example of plot subverted to setting, but Mr. Beer's short-coming as a novelist is made more egregious in this instance by the imperfectness of his characterizations. The whole galaxy of characters who belong instinctively to an artificial world are as flawless, in their exterior reproduction, as is the exterior of their gilded background. But in this novel it is imperative that they display an emotional capacity as well as an intellectual one, and this Mr. Beer finds it impossible to grant them. They breathe, they talk (brilliantly, because after all they are simply a small world of Thomas Beers going round conversing), they make love, they wring their hands; but they are the creation of a man who cannot instill in them any compulsion of spirit. They are the most difficult people in the world to do in pen and ink, because their glitter, wit, and brilliance are in the sounds they produce, the liveliness of their chatter, more than in their thought or meaning. When put into books (as they too frequently are by the younger novelists), this charm of voice and mannerism is decimated, and they appear on the pages as dull, turgid pseudo-intellectuals. Transcribed by Mr. Beer, they are as alive and scintillating as their prototypes in the flesh. The resemblance of the real and the synthetic is superficial, and exists only until one notices the entire absence in these characters of any inner reality. An emotion, springing from stark simplicity, leaves Mr. Beer not cold, but painfully embarrassed in his perception of it as not "civilized". It must either be let alone, or whispered about in malicious, but socially correct, accents.

It is bad enough that the characters which Mr. Beer can do so exquisitely should partially fail, but it is somewhat more distressing that Lamon Coe, who, I suppose, is the protagonist of this novel, should be thrown so entirely out of perspective by the author's handling. Lamon Coe is a farmer, a man of the soil; yet Mr. Beer makes him willing to return to the village of his birth to open a store. Plainly, there is nothing

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in life that Coe regards with the slightest respect except the land and all it embodies; yet Mr. Beer says that he "knew what he wanted had no value but still wanted it". There is, however, no hope of side-stepping the fact of Lamon's emotions, and Mr. Beer treats them by the "stream of consciousness" method—a method unfair to the reader who wants to know what a character's emotions are about as well as what they are, and unfair to the character because, although he may have formulated the words of his passions, he would never have spoken or written them. The result is that emotions almost austere in their simplicity are made to appear, by an author's attenuated refinement, very nearly lewd.

The book, however, is more nearly a rounded whole than any other of the novels of Mr. Beer. By death and catastrophe, fortune and misfortune, everyone gets what he wants or is not in a position to know what he wants. The completeness of it is somewhat exaggerated: events and persons whom it is quite unnecessary to connect are tied together by a too intrusive fate. Everything is forecast, often to the detriment of the final effect, and everyone, for apparently no reason whatsoever, turns out to be the cousin or aunt or chauffeur of everyone else.

But these are minor points of contention, hardly worth quibbling, when they are juxtaposed with those qualities in which are founded Mr. Beer's excellence as an entertainer and his limitations as a novelist—the qualities which make his books masterly embodiments of scene, and prevent them from being novels because of their subordination to scene; which make his characters marvelous portrayals based on his urbane comprehension of polished exteriors and keep them from being perceived as persons instead of ornaments. With every work from Mr. Beer's pen comes a greater artistry of conception and expression, and all are gratefully suave in a world of books blatant and shrieking. But he is far from his road to a novelist's heaven and in all probability the paradise will never be gained. Paradise, from Mr. Beer, would be the stories of what he intended the published works to be about; of what his characters would and would *not* do, and why. In Mr. Beer's heaven are the books that he thinks before he undertakes to write, and the books he could write after he had finished those that are published.

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THE VICTORIOUS VICTORIANS

By John Macy

FOR the last thirty years or so it has been the fashion to patronize the Victorians, even to sneer at them. Mid-Victorian, early Victorian, late-Victorian became almost terms of reproach. Lytton Strachey and Gilbert K. Chesterton amused themselves with a sort of critical parody of their elders. It is understandable that lesser fellows who could not write the most silly sentimental page of Dickens or the most thinly good-mannered page of Thackeray should smirk at the century that has just died and is very much alive. But it is a little disturbing that men of our time who have done serious and honest work almost as good as that of the last century should lift their noses at their grandfathers with a sniff of superiority. Historians have demolished Macaulay and reduced the once towering structure of Carlyle to a heap of errors. Modern art criticism is contemptuous of Ruskin. Arnold Bennett condescendingly dismisses Dickens by giving him credit for a certain "caustic verve"; and in an enthusiastic appreciation of Mark Twain he quite irrelevantly rubs George Eliot off the map. Bernard Shaw is certain that he knows more about Becky Sharp than Thackeray knew. When Rawdon Crawley knocks Lord Steyne down, and Becky admires her virile husband, Thackeray is guilty of a Victorian sentimentality; Becky would have sympathized with the weaker beaten man. I rather think that Thackeray knew, but if he did misunderstand a woman's character, why ascribe his error to his "Victorianism"?

And so it goes. Any of these special judgments may be intelligent and just. What is not intelligent is to create a general Victorian spirit, a schematic character to which every man and woman of the period must correspond. Every era must have certain intellectual qualities and style of dress. A man lives in his own time. And every period is in some way a revolt against the preceding age. Pope and Swift were not in sympathy with the seventeenth century. A hundred years later the romantics rebelled against the age of Johnson; and Coleridge was a little surprised when in a lecture he spoke of "that fellow Johnson" and the audience showed disapproval, if they did not openly boo him. But there is a danger that looking in retrospect on any period we formalize and stiffen it into lifeless poses, and we are especially likely to make that mistake about the times that are immediately behind us. In the series of reactions and new movements which constitute the history of life and so the history of literature, it was natural that the generation which is just passing should have turned their backs on their grandfathers and regarded the old gentlemen and ladies as somewhat smoky and old-fashioned. I think the time, by another reaction, is arriving when we are ready to return to the Victorians. The pendulum is starting to swing the other way, and I should be modestly happy if I could give it one feeble push.

So I determined to go back and take a look at them, as if I did not know what the accepted stock portrait is, almost as if I had never read them, as if "Vanity Fair" and "Idylls of the King" were new books. This is a preliminary and sketchy account of some things that I found.

In the first place there is no such thing as Victorianism that can be defined and into which those now aged masters can be made to fit. The account which has been getting solidified and accepted since the self-conscious young old days which used to be called *fin de siècle* is simply a myth, a caricature. The amount of macassar oil necessary to make a reality of the conventional picture of that period in one matter of toilet would have taxed the capacity of a fleet of tank steamers; and all the looms of Lancashire would have been kept busy manufacturing the little tidies which protected the

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upholstery from the greasy heads of Englishmen. As for the upholstery itself and the wood that supported it, apparently all the factories in the world were running at full speed to supply ugly furniture for English houses. It is permissible to meet caricature with caricature. These things are fripperies like the billions of yards of crinoline. One terrible caricature which is no frippery but a tragic distortion is the representation of England as completely covered by the smoke of Industrialism. Everybody, politician, priest, poet seems to have been taking refuge from smoke, or protesting against it, or living comfortably on the product of the wheels turned by the fires that made the smoke. Nobody escaped. The terrible fact was there, and the condition of the working-people was unendurable, as in some places it is now. But none of these one-color pictures can be true and they are not true to the records that the Victorians have left.

For this is the greatest thing about this great age, the variety of its color and the incredible variety of mind and interest. No other period thought so many kinds of thoughts or had so many men of different temperaments, conflicting purposes, of independent, even solitary, ways of looking at life. I appeal, of course, to literature and not much to economics and politics, though these are involved in literature.

Look at "The Oxford Book of Victorian Verse". The amazing thing about this book, which is only a glimpse at the poetry of the period, is the great number of beautiful things by different poets. May criticism save us from saying that it is better than the poetry of the golden age of Shelley or the more remote golden age of Shakespeare, from whom these Victorians are descended. But these Victorians are astonishing for the abundant diversity of their style and thought. The song birds of England have increased in number and also in the range of notes. There is no Victorian manner. The poets of the spacious days of Elizabeth, for all their powerful individual genius, do write Elizabethan so much alike in tone and quality that scholars have got in a hopeless tangle trying to determine by the feeling and run of the verse, aside from other evidence, who collaborated with whom. Under the same difficulties of anonymity and lack of record we might also be lost if we tried to place all the lines written during the reign of the later queen. And a hundred years from now scholars may be able to find a Victorian style of poetry. But I cannot discover a recognizable uniformity. Even one of those whom we rather stupidly call minor poets breaks into a melody which seems to have nothing to do with the neighboring and commanding masters. An example is Sydney Dobell's exquisite "Even-Song" which does not clearly suggest any other poet. Daring young poets of today may be interested to note that this perfect song, written more than half a century ago, is in free verse. I could cite many examples from "The Oxford Book", and still more from the complete works of the poets, of what I mean by the independence and originality of the Victorian singers, not only the acknowledged masters but the lesser men.

And of the acknowledged masters which is that typical characteristic Victorian imagined by mythological criticism? There simply is none. The most plausible candidate is Tennyson, the anointed poetic king of his dear Queen. He fits pretty well into the formal picture of the age, with his romantic dignity and his unquestionable respectability. He succeeded in removing all passion from our dreams of fair women and in transforming the wild knights of romance into English gentlemen. The pagan king Arthur almost belongs to the Church of England and wears a double-breasted coat of broad-cloth. Fitzgerald gave him up with affectionate despair. A later Victorian rebel, Samuel Butler, in one of his many amusing notes says that his father does not like Shakespeare, which is pardonable, but, what is unpardonable, he does like Tennyson. After the ecstasy of Wagner we can hardly hear the silly peep of Tennyson's amorous heroes. And yet this view of Tennyson is unfair, a caricature. If he did not understand Tristan, he did understand the glory of English verse and he gave to English poetry some of its magic lines. He had the voice of lark and of nightingale. It is a com-

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monplace of literary history that Tennyson was a great poet. You can find that fact in all the handbooks. But some of our modern critics seem to have forgotten it or denied it.

If Tennyson with his passionless propriety seems to conform perfectly to the legend of his time, just how are we to account for his contemporaries, Browning and Swinburne? They, too, were English in blood and breeding, and as unlike each other and as unlike the official laureate as it is possible for great poets to be who live at the same time and are masters of the same language. Both Browning and Swinburne are somewhat out of drawing with the Victorian myth because they were not wholly respectable. It will shock some nice old ladies who belong to the Browning Societies to be told that their learned and difficult poet was a passionate defender of some things that are currently called immoral. The good souls try to unriddle his obscurities and add complexities to his philosophy, but do they really understand what he means when his words are perfectly plain? At least two of Browning's poems are utterly contrary to prevalent Anglo-Saxon ethics and statutes. One is "Ivan Ivanovitch", which is a justification of lynch-law. The woman confesses that to save herself she has thrown her children to the wolves. Ivan calmly beheads her with his axe. The authorities, notably the old priest, acquit him as a servant of God. In our time we have something like this rough justice in "the unwritten law", in which many of us in our secret hearts believe. And Ivan did not join a masked gang and kill his victim anonymously, as is our American habit, but took full responsibility. Moreover the story is laid in Russia, a more or less strange and wild country, not in the land of British justice. But Ivan by taking the law into his own hands committed murder, and though the whole story is objectified, as was Browning's habit, you can feel from the throb of the lines that this elderly poet (it is one of Browning's late pieces) cordially approved this anarchistic violation of statute and due process of law.

Another splendidly immoral poem of Browning's is "The Statue and the Bust". Some who frown over the intricate perplexities of the poet and who rejoice in his optimism, the intellectual fraud of "Pippa Passes" and the senile good cheer of the last poem ("One who never turned his back", etc.) seem not to have read "The Statue and The Bust". It is a direct challenge to founded virtue, a threnody on illicit love not realized, of lost youth and passion killed by the encroachments of time. This English poet of sober aspect, who in his later years was said to look like a banker (however a banker may look), was a wild adventurous romantic with a taste for stories not quite decorous, a love in its way as mad as Byron's for the grotesque, the bizarre, the shocking.

A friend has told me of seeing him drive a span of white horses at startling pace through the streets of Florence. This spirited vision of the English gentleman does not, I think, appear in the official biographies, but I accept it as true, for my friend, a rather literal person though an artist, could not have invented it. Browning's elopement with Elizabeth Barrett was an ecstatic flight which not even the publication of their awful letters can reduce to prosaic commonplace. He was much closer to the riotous Elizabethans than to Alfred Lord Tennyson or to Professor Matthew Arnold. He escaped from England, perhaps because he could not stand its drab respectability, but he remembered it beautifully, now that April's here. At home he was degreed and honored and duly prepared for burial in Westminster Abbey. The biographers who created the Victorian myth have put a becoming shroud on him and made him moralist and prophet and philosopher and all things dignified and worthy. See Sir Leslie Stephen's incredibly dull article in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. But Robert Browning does not live in those chaste garments. He would have laughed himself out of them; for he had humor, which was at times rather acid. And he had passion. "Fifine at the Fair" is Don Juan on a variegated rampage, a celebration of the many ways of love, not regular but human. It is quite safe to recommend to young ladies and need not be excluded from the public libraries, for it is somewhat clotted with

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speculation and is stimulating only to those who are old enough to understand it.

Swinburne is easier to understand, for his words are simple and his syntax impeccable, and his ideas are not difficult to grasp. He was the son of an admiral in the Royal Navy and grandson of an earl, and what can be more British than that? But he was a rebel; he rushed with a flaming sword through the proprieties, a knight of Venus and Republicanism. The British public at first loved him not, were outraged by the blazing audacities of "Poems and Ballads", and pelted him with abuse, which of course only fed the fires in his blood. Some of his adversaries had learned a generation earlier to take Byron and Shelley for granted, yet this unscrupulous new poet was really both the natural and the legitimate son of those elder revolutionary poets. Swinburne conquered and by the time he was thirty had taken his place among the singers of England. He was very sure of himself. He knew a good poem when he saw it even if it were his own. He could afford to be independent of public opinion and the fortunes of the book-sellers; and when he proudly coupled his name with Landor's:

> The youngest to the oldest singer
> That England bore

he happened to be right. And there is one respect in which the association is especially happy; no modern poets, not even Arnold, were so thoroughly drenched and dyed in Greek as old Walter Savage and young Algernon Charles. If you are not a better Greek scholar than I am, you can pretty safely accept, as I do, Professor Mahaffy's approval of "Atalanta in Calydon". Only note that these English poets, however solid their scholarship, went back to the classics as to the Middle Ages in a mood of romantic revival. If Swinburne was Greek, he was also French, and he was incurably English. His deepest literary passion is for the Elizabethans, whose praises he sings in lyrical prose, too often verbose and not quite sober, but just as often with majestic splendor of phrase—one poet about another, the youngest singer to still older singers. After his essay on Marlowe, all other essays, some of them no doubt much wiser and saner, seem cold as a lecture in a college class-room. His rebellious devil-may-care bravado is really little more than the recovery for English poetry of the freedom, dash and candor of the older centuries. In performing this excellent service to beauty, he added to English poetry melodies and rhythms quite his own, a new glory to the tradition. And Englishmen, those who read poetry at all, soon accepted him, and he became as firmly established as some other naughty boys, for example Robert Burns.

Swinburne was the champion, the evangelist of Eros. His voice had many notes besides the amorous, but I dwell especially on "Before Dawn", "In the Orchard", "Les Noyades", his erotic verse, because it leads me to one of the great superstitions about the Victorians: that they were prudes, afraid to discuss, except in private, the ardors of the body, or to express openly the central facts of sex. The stock joke is that reticence went so far that people walked on two limbs. Modesty required that a girl should be completely ignorant before she was married. One pictures a society of smug hypocritical decency, whatever dreadful sins were committed under cover. In a sense the protests that greeted Swinburne's roses and raptures of vice give foundation to this chaste tradition, as does also the disposition to praise the moral elevation of Browning and ignore his wild fires. There is also the notorious attack of Robert Buchanan on "The Fleshly School of Poetry", which is important only for the hot replies of Rossetti and Swinburne, and which Buchanan later regretted. Even the veteran Gosse, who probably enjoys the Elizabethans up to the hilt, echoes not very censoriously the spirit of the time by saying that it is impossible to acquit Swinburne entirely of the charge of animalism—as if any honest vigorous man would wish to be acquitted of it!

Undoubtedly some of the liberty, or license, of the preceding three centuries had to be curtailed as reading passed from the sophisticated few to the innocent multitude of physically or intellectually immature. This was not altogether a loss. Literature does not suffer complete sterility because, as

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Kipling, the last and youngest of the authentic Victorians, says, we did not talk obstetrics when the little stranger came. But there was a loss, and it was felt by one qualified to speak, Thackeray. In the preface to "Pendennis" he says: "Since the author of 'Tom Jones' was buried, no writer of fiction among us has been permitted to depict to his utmost power a MAN. You must drape him, and give him a certain conventional simper. Society will not tolerate the Natural in Art. . . . You will not hear—it is best to know it—what moves in the real world, what passes in society, in the clubs, colleges, mess-rooms,—what is the life and talk of your sons. A little more frankness than is customary has been attempted in this story". It is idle to regret that if that is the way Thackeray felt about it he did not break loose and write with still more frankness in spite of his great admiring public. Thackeray's best women are not the saintly Amelias, but Becky and Beatrice Esmond, whose decline into the withered old woman in "The Virginians" was certainly not down the straight road of virtue, though the details are not given. It is an open secret, though not in the biographies, that after the early and life-long illness of his wife, Thackeray, a married widower, went the way natural to vigorous men and paid for it by his otherwise unaccountably premature death at the age of fifty-two. The purpose of repeating this is only to suggest that Victorian expression and Victorian practice were not in accord, and Thackeray, an honest man, felt it and so looked back regretfully at the eighteenth century.

These restrictions and prohibitions are admitted, but they did not completely prevail; they are not the whole story, not a rounded picture of the time. Some men did defy them, the poets rather than the novelists, for the poet has a finer audience, at least he is not so dependent on the favor of a large miscellaneous public. Moreover, poetry by its subtle concealments and suggestions can touch subjects which plain prose would only fumble and render gross. The substance, the act, in Rossetti's sonnet, "Supreme Surrender", is clear as daylight and quite simply human, but the exquisite poetry transmutes it into something far above our common clay. In Mr. T. R. Smith's finely edited collection of amatory verse, "Poetica Erotica", the selections from the nineteenth century are on the whole finer in quality and not less intense in passion than those from the earlier and less restrained centuries. And it should be remembered that all the literature of those earlier centuries was more completely and accurately edited, without expurgations, and more widely distributed by the Victorians than ever before; this is true also of the ancient classics where no idea is suppressed. If the Victorians had any timidities about speaking out themselves they enjoyed free access to everything that had been said before, so that they had at least a kind of inherited freedom of thought. They rescued, multiplied, and circulated every kind of idea from a bolder and rougher past.

If there is one man who seems the graven image of the cut-and-dried Victorian, it is Macaulay. This is what he says (I owe the quotation to Mr. Smith) about the Restoration dramatists: "The whole liberal education of our countrymen is conducted on the principle, that no book which is valuable, either by the excellence of its style, or by reason of the light which it throws on the history, polity, and manner of nations, should be withheld from the student on account of its impurity". It is not clear whether he intended to admit the general inquisitive reader as a "student", but at any rate this distinguished moral historian was not a prude. Neither were his great contemporaries. They were men.

Dickens revelled in Smollett and regarded Tom Jones as a "harmless fellow", which of course he was. Like Thackeray, Dickens would not have been allowed to portray a young man like Tom Jones or send him through some of those not always creditable adventures. In his own work Dickens has the fault commonly ascribed to him and to much Victorian fiction, of dividing humanity too obviously according to the accepted virtues and vices and of distributing rewards and punishments with a god-like complacency. His villains are terrible and come to a bad end; his good children achieve a happiness which is a bit more glowing than

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our common experience teaches us is probable. That is why he is at his best in treating characters not conspicuous for the highest or the lowest moral qualities but amiably amusing or marked by minor vices and foibles which can be turned into ridicule; he is also good when there is no question of character and the pathos and humor lie wholly in the situation. The secret of his pre-eminence among popular novelists is that, besides his fun (which is still funny), he had gusto, narrative vigor, a sense of adventure, which any writer of fiction may envy. To get the full pleasure of his vast entertainment it is well not to analyze too sharply his own analysis of character and society. But to dismiss him in the modern fashion as a sentimental Victorian best-seller is to add to what I have noted as the increasing misconception of a great age. It is pleasant to find Mr. Santayana, who would seem to be as far away from everything Victorian except Pater, coming freshly upon Dickens and writing at the age of sixty the finest possible essay upon him. Perhaps the Victorians are being rediscovered.

The popular novelists were obliged to follow the properly surveyed ethical highways. There were two who pursued their own course and let the people talk, or not talk, Meredith and Hardy. They are as different from each other as they are from their contemporaries, but they are alike in that they shook off all restraints except laws of art as they saw them and their own sense of life. There is not a page in either of them which a young person may not read, but the implications of some of their stories are subversive of what the young person is supposed to believe. In Meredith, as in Browning, whom he resembles more than any other of his neighbors, dynamitic ideas are involved in colored veils of metaphor. He made a revolution in fiction, though the revolution did not take effect until many years after the work of his prime was written. It is difficult to realize that "Richard Feverel" was published in 1859, the year of "The Tale of Two Cities" and "Adam Bede". Never had the passion of a young man been so powerfully analyzed, so almost explosively torn apart. Here first appears the great Meredithian secret, the creation by the character, and its action on events, of its own moral. Meredith does not care a rap what society thinks, except as it affects his character. So far as essential ethics is concerned, the ethics of the individual, Meredith is more austere than the Pope, for he is true not to a code but to the actual weaknesses, nobilities, agonies of human character. Never was young man more terribly punished than Feverel, and he is victim not only of his outrageous father but of his own "sin". In one of his least known novels and one of the best, "Lord Ormont and His Aminta", there is an implied, indeed fairly explicit, justification of infidelity. Man must obey nature. Love is more important than marriage, an institution for which Meredith had little respect.

The rebellion of Thomas Hardy came a little later. He also is not interested in any laws except those of human nature and the outer nature that surrounds and conditions us. The end of "Tess" shows what he thinks of "justice", as it is understood by society and the courts of law. On a higher tragic plane it is in accordance with a passage in "Lord Ormont", in which Meredith argumentatively disposes of a lesser aspect of justice, or injustice, in the name of and by the right of Nature. Meredith's challenging criticism of the world is more heartily comic than Hardy's grave irony. Yet there is one poem, "The Dark-Eyed Gentleman", in which Hardy, who finds little enough joy in life, sings with a curiously gay lilt the joy of a woman in an illegitimate son, fruit of a chance acquaintance.

The Victorians expressed almost every idea under the sun, obeying convention or flouting it as they chose. There is no Victorian idea or ideal. The "Victorian Compromise" of Chesterton is nothing but one of his clever inventions; it simply never happened. This was an age of conflicts and contrasts, in which the ideas of the past and new ideas spread out, multiplied, and were developed in one and another aspect by men of different temperaments. It was a time of stout intellectual fighting. Ideas clashed, fused, divided; some were finally phrased, some left in the air. Since the contestants were men of genius, they were all victorious.

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GAUGUIN AND THOREAU: A COMPARISON

By John Cournos

HENRY THOREAU the American and Paul Gauguin the Frenchman have as many points of unlikeness as of likeness. They meet in a common desire for a new Eden on earth, but, as will be seen, their ideas of the hypothetical garden are at considerable variance, conditioned as such ideas are by race, climate and environment, and not a little by the fact that the one is a philosopher and a puritan, the other a painter and a full-blooded man. The one and the other has been called a "savage"; this epithet could hardly, with any fairness, be applied to two such complex, sensitive beings as Thoreau and Gauguin. It would be truer to say that they were so saturated with civilization that in sheer despair they turned their mood to savagery as a cure for a growing malady which was beyond cure.

First, as regards the points at which they meet. They are both rebels against the existing order with all its mechanical artifices and appliances, which, though apparently intended to make us all more comfortable, actually create for mankind a multitude of unnecessary "necessities"; these, besides making useless labor, serve to swamp the fundamental impulses and functions of life and, presumably, take from man that natural enjoyment which is his right. Hence, it is not surprising to find Thoreau and Gauguin believing in simplicity, but the difference between the simplicity of one and that of the other is nothing short of abysmal. Before this difference is defined, it should be emphasized that from his first conscious moment Thoreau was a stable character whose urge to simplicity was as first nature. To him may be applied Goethe's words: "Well it is for a man who can make the end of his life tally with the beginning".

As for Gauguin, his need finally came to him as a reaction from the life he was living. In short, he came to it as a convert who felt he had been duped, with all the ardor of one who had intense vigor and fine perceptions. He had, until then, lived a life full and even rich, in its own way, in a positive sense; beside it, Thoreau's life was colorless and negative. At all events, when Gauguin made his final decision to abandon bourgeois Europe for Tahiti he was hating civilization with that full-blown hatred which comes with discovery; he was one who suddenly had his eyes opened to the realization that everything around him was sham and deceit and that he himself had all his life been the dupe of those shameless forces whose true nature had only now been revealed to him.

Thoreau very early saw the futility of the vast energy expended by man for material ends; perhaps the frugality of his own nature—he was a mixture of Norman and Scotch stocks—gave him the power to see more clearly than other men how, as humanity worked harder, its wants piled up and its once humble habitations became relative mansions, repositories of numerous useless furniture and gewgaws; thus the human mind floundered in the confusion of its possessions. A Puritan philosopher, wishing to see the race improved and holding noble conduct to be the supreme goal, he saw but one way out of the maze of false cumulations: a return to Nature, the source of things; for at the source all things are clear and simple, as yet unpolluted by the perverse indulgences of human activity gone wrong. Was it so hard to leave a crowded junk-shop, in which one's every movement was hampered and every free thought lost under the dust? Well, he for one, a detached spectator seeing from the first how things stood within, simply refused to enter. He wanted to belong to himself, and not to the things which you thought you possessed but which really possessed you. The men he discerned in the dark recesses of crowded interiors belonged to them as inevitably as the pieces of furni-

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ture which formed such an intrinsic part of them. To enter would be to lose himself, to leave every hope behind of being a free natural man.

Gauguin, a husband, a father of five children, a stock-broker by trade (a stock-broker of all things!) lived in such a junk-shop. A dream of color having come to him somewhat late in life, his eyes were opened to the true state of affairs. And what an awakening it was! It played havoc with the lives of his family, but above all with his own life; and it left a mark on the world's art.

It is rather curious that the two "savages" should meet on ground which may be deemed Christian, on the principle of "Take no thought for the morrow . . . Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof".

Listen to Thoreau:

"Why should we live with such hurry and waste of life? We are determined to be starved before we are hungry. Men say that a stitch in time saves nine, and so they take a thousand stitches to save nine tomorrow."

And now hear Gauguin:

"If only people did not spend so much time in useless and unrelated work! One stitch a day—that's the great point."

What both men clearly saw was that in civilization men lived in such constant fear of poverty and were so concerned about future security that they forgot to live in the present.

Thoreau, with the practical nature of a Puritan philosopher, at the very beginning divested himself of all wants, so-called "needs", which might weigh as ballast on his soul, and he worked out a scheme of life which enabled him to reverse the usual order of things and really to put into practice the idea he had expressed in his "commencement" talk: that of having one working-day a week and making the other six "his Sabbath of the affections and the soul". He had calculated with a truly New England practicalness that it would require but thirty to forty working days a year to support himself, and he built himself a shanty in Walden (Waldo-Eden) which cost him the munificent sum of $28.12½! Gauguin had also, with his own hands, built himself a house in Tahiti, but being an artist and having a prodigal nature, he made it beautiful with stained-glass windows and wood-carvings of his own device. He wanted more than Thoreau, and his desires broke him where the more modest ones saved the New Englander his peace.

It must be admitted, Thoreau did without things. Nor was this a sacrifice on his part. He neither needed nor wanted things. He was a Nay-sayer. He had said No to so many things. He once said No to a lady who had offered him her hand in marriage! One suspects that sometimes he rather annoyed his friends by his attitude of negation. He must have now and then proved something of a damper on their spirits, though children loved him as he loved them, which was also true of Gauguin. One thinks of the witty saying of a friend: "I love Henry, but I cannot like him". And it was Emerson who said of him:

"He was bred to no profession; he never married; he lived alone; he never went to church; he never voted; he refused to pay a tax to the State; he ate no flesh, he drank no wine, he never knew the use of tobacco; and though a naturalist, he used neither trap nor gun. When asked at dinner what dish he preferred, he answered, 'the nearest'."

It is easy to enjoy life when one's wants are small. What pleasure was his came from within, and that which was within responded to a few things without and created its own small yet perfect harmonies. And so he swam and skated and climbed and boated. For a livelihood he did occasional surveying or manual labor. And, as he had once said, he "had travelled far in Concord". This life provided for him an Eden of sorts, within the reach of all, and he undoubtedly thought that what sufficed him should suffice all. But he made no effort to convert anybody. He had no intention of meddling, and all he asked was to be left alone.

It was different with Gauguin. Of a volcanic temperament, rage possessed him when he realized the lie of the life around him. Energetic, he carried war into the enemy's camp. Civilization accepted his challenge,

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pursued him to the bitter end. That was partly, perhaps, because he was again and again in dire straits and needed money. And money was civilization's great weapon; lack of it to provide his wants and paints for his pictures was his weakness. Once or twice it came to him, to pass between his fingers like water. He had the fault of his virtue. He was prodigal in his art, and he was prodigal in life. It was a harmony of sorts, but it was disastrous. Could he have saved the whole of his prodigality for his art, he might have saved himself the bitter fate which awaited him. To reproach him with this is also folly.

Beauty rather than conduct being his ultimate goal, his idea of beauty implied its own code of conduct; just as Thoreau's idea of conduct implied its own code of beauty; austere beauty, to be sure, but still beauty. So here, beginning from different starting points, the two men again meet—in a measure; just as two men, one travelling east, the other west, are inevitably bound to meet. In this meeting they may find that they seek the same thing, with personal modifications. As has already been pointed out, there was French blood in both. But the admixture in one was Scotch, in the other Peruvian-Spanish. Was it not because of this difference that they diverged so violently one from the other? They both diagnosed, with a clarity peculiarly French, the malady which infected civilization. Does not Gauguin, if in different words, echo Thoreau's thought? Gauguin says:

"Artists have lost their savagery, and no longer able to rely on instinct, one might better say imagination, have strayed off on many different paths to find the productive elements they have no longer the strength to create, and now they cannot work except in disorderly crowds, feeling frightened, almost lost if left to themselves . . . . All that I have learned from others has only hampered me. So I can say: no one has given me anything. It is true I know better. But I prefer that little which is my own."

It has been charged against both men that they have been too solitary, too unsociable, too indifferent to others. Gauguin is fully aware of the charge, for he says somewhere: "That is how unsociable I am. I admit my words are sometimes sarcastic, I do not flatter, bend my back, and sneak about begging in official salons". Thoreau's relations with men were easier because he mingled less with them, and his social errors were mostly those of omission than of commission. He did not anger the existing order as Gauguin did, because he kept out of its way; nor had he wholly turned his contemptuous back on it as Gauguin had when, with a gesture truly heroic, he abandoned Europe for Tahiti. But the painter's anger was great when he saw the devastating effects produced on the South Seas islanders by the encroaching Europeans; equally great was the suffering he experienced on realizing that he was half civilized, half savage, which created a conflict within himself hard to resolve. He saw in the isle of Tahiti vestiges of a passing Eden, in which men lived in amity, lazed their lives away in serene indolence, walked about naked without false shame; he saw in all this a potent criticism of hypocritical Europe, a land which preached a beautiful religion without any effort to practice it, and made of money a god, and lived in the continual strife of a material competition which brought pleasure to the few and suffering to the many. Energetic, volcanic, distressed with numerous fears, sceptical with irreligion; that was the one half of him, his heritage from Europe, working like an insidious poison to destroy him; there was the other half which longed for faith, the only thing which might create true art, and for a serenity of mind and soul which comes with faith. He sought it here, in his new surroundings, and snatched at glimpses which were passing. And, for all his inner distress and material wants, he managed to imprison, on canvas, in bright colors, these glimpses of Paradise vouchsafed him before he died.

His pictures went to Europe, which admired Gauguin from afar and made a kind of legend of him without understanding the import of his creation. Is not this reminiscent of Swift, who wrote a bitter satire in Gulliver's Travels, now mostly read as a children's fairy-tale? But the miracle is that Gauguin's pictures are by no means bitter. In his way Gauguin has conquered.

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"Is the Indian vanquished who smiles at his torture? Decidedly, the savage is nobler than we." So Gauguin had once said, and it is equally true that those who today look on his smiling evocations in paint cannot miss his magnificent serenity, but they are not apt to see the inner torture of their author. Is it not a miracle that a man suffering such terrible torture should have created such serene dreams? And so the spirit has, after all, conquered matter, and humanity, willy-nilly, is a sharer in the victory.

There is a difference between the "nether Eden" that Thoreau so often spoke of in his books and the Eden which Gauguin painted. It is a difference largely of temperament. If Thoreau had painted, his figures undoubtedly would have been clothed, by no means luxuriously, but still, clothed. He lived in a climate in which clothing was necessary. There would have been other differences typical of Northern temperament and thought. It is logical to suppose that every race, if it could be induced to create Eden, would create it in its own image, according to its own peculiar needs and concepts. But in essentials, the serene joys which both Thoreau and Gauguin had sought, all Edens are bound to have common features.

We are far from Eden. But though men die their aspirations live. The words of Thoreau, the pictures of Gauguin, are not lost. Bad as things are, they might be worse but for dreamers and their dreams. In what they leave behind there lives the undying aspiration for that Eden which man once had had and lost.

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TWO STORIES ABOUT JIM

By Genevieve Taggard

"WELL," said my father, taking two kids on his lap, "there aren't any more stories about little Jimmie Todd and the hoot owl. But I'll tell you one about myself. Hmmm. My name was Jimmie, too.

"Our house in Missouri when I was a little boy had a dirt floor. And your grandmother wove all our pants and shirts. We were away from everybody, on a little farm in the Ozarks. We saw other folks on Sundays at church, and they all wore the clothes they made, too. We never got anything from the outside world, and we didn't go to school. Hmmm.

"Well, one day when I was a little boy, so little I had to be lifted up to get on the old white plug—that's the name for a horse that isn't much good for anything any more—Grandma put me on Old Nellie with a sack of corn slung across her back and sent me off at a walk for the miller. I had to go to the miller because Grandpa was clearing off stumps near the timber. Brother John was too little.

"Well, I went along on Nellie, looking at the bare road—no trees, no big stones, just land, and a little tiny line of mountains away off. The corn was in the two ends of the bag on each side of Nellie, and I sat in the middle to keep it on. It was miles to the miller, and the sun was hot. There was a couple of wagon tracks in the road; I could see they were fresh, because there was hoof marks too, along inside of them. That was all.

"You see, I have to tell you that I had never been to school or seen city people; and I had never had a single thing that came from a store. There was a store twenty miles away, but I had never been to it. At Christmas Grandma put some home-made molasses candy in our wool stockings—in Brother John's and mine.

"As I was saying, I was going along very slowly on old Nellie, watching her and the road, and I saw right under her feet a red lead-pencil, bran new. There it was in the middle of the road. In the dust. I pulled Nellie to stop, and she didn't step on it. I turned her around, and sure enough it was a red lead-pencil. It had never been sharpened. I had seen one like it in the minister's coat-pocket at church.

"Hmmm. Well, I just sat there and sat. I went on down the road a little way to see if there was a big rock to get off on, but I knew there wasn't. I thought there might be a fence post or something. But there wasn't. I came back and Nellie put her nose down and blew the dust close to it. But I couldn't get down, out there in the bare road.

"Then I thought I'd wait, and maybe the farm folks, from the farm over by the gulch, would come by. But they didn't. I sat there quite a while and then I noticed the sun was past noon, and so I went on to the miller. It was a long way, and I didn't meet anybody. By this time I thought that the miller would be pretty sure to help me. He took me down, and ground the corn, and then I told him. He shook his head and put the corn meal evenly into the two ends of the sack and lifted me up and gave the horse a spank, and said, 'No'.

"Well, I went back. I got to thinking that the people who had lost the pencil would come back for it. It probably fell out of a wagon going back from the store. I watched the road and two or three times the empty road seemed to be exactly the place I'd seen it. I didn't dare look up for a minute.

"When the horse had been going along with her head down for a long time and the sun was almost down, I saw it again. It was bright red. I slipped part way off Nellie, and the corn slipped, too; but I didn't even

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have a stirrup, and so I pulled back up again by her mane and sat there some more.

"But nobody came along.

"And so by and by I went on off home."

II

"You didn't like that pencil story very much, did you?" said my father, taking two kids onto his lap. "Well, I won't tell you any more like that. I'll tell you a funny story this time. It's about me and John, quite a while after. Hmmm."

My father and my sister and I had been watering the plants in our tropic garden, in between the broad leaves, under the mangoes and bananas. Then the sun went down of a sudden and the mosquitoes began to hum. So we went inside and washed our feet for bed; and he put on his loose slippers. Inside the screens we sat on his lap in the big rocker, and put our heads against each of his thin cheeks. He looked straight out between us, into the dark garden. And began:

"John and I had been going to school for about three months when one Saturday in the spring the children told us there was going to be a circus about fifteen miles away, over at Conway. Grandma said we could go, and we got up early, almost before it was light, Saturday morning to get there before noon-time when the circus would begin. We did our chores and started out.

"Grandma had given each of us a hard-boiled duck-egg for our lunch. That was all we had, and we put them in our pants' behind pocket and started out down the old road, and then branched off, a new way.

"'Say, Jim,' said Brother John, 'what's better than a circus even, we are going to go over a railroad track before get there.'

"'I'd rather see a circus,' I said.

"But we had never seen a railroad track, or a train. And so it seemed that everything was happening that day. It was a new railroad. Grandpa had seen it. The train came over it every day; and we used to hear it hoot about noon, at school. I had forgotten all about the railroad when the children told us about the circus. Grandpa didn't have time to take us to it in the wagon. He was busy clearing stumps off a new field he was going to plant to sorghum.

"Well, we went on feeling the knob the duck-eggs made in our back pockets. At last we came to a little hump in the road, and some wooden planks, and there was the train track, stretching both ways silver and hard in the sunshine. John and I put our hands on the cold steel. We got afraid, looking both ways, wondering which way the engine would come, and how fast. Then John put his ear down to see if he could hear the wheels, and I yelled to him that he would get his head cut off by the train if it suddenly came. We went down the other side, and started to walk to the circus.

"Then I got to thinking, and I said to John, 'The circus doesn't begin till this afternoon; let's sit down here and eat our eggs and maybe the train will come by'.

"So we went back and squatted by the side of the road and started to crack our eggs.

"'Duck eggs are the hardest things in the world,' said John. That was what all us children believed.

"'They are a lot harder than rocks,' I said, 'or pieces of iron. They are harder than trains, or wagons. I bet one duck-egg could wreck a train.'

"Brother John stopped and held his hand over his and shook it.

"'I bet it could, too.'

"Then he looked at me as if he had an idea, but he didn't say anything.

"'Ma said that when they was hard-boiled they was hard enough to crack your head on,' I said. I tried cracking it on top my head, but it didn't crack. Neither of us started to peel ours.

"All of a sudden John jumped up and ran to the track. 'Jim,' he said, 'let's put our eggs on here. And see if they can wreck the train. I wonder if they really can.'

"So we each put an egg on the track. And then we ran off down the road, with our hearts beating, scared to death. We slowed up after a while, but we kept looking back, terribly scared, and we kept listening for the train. After we had gone about a mile, not saying anything to each other, I said: 'Look here, John, if those eggs wreck the

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train, people will get killed and their legs cut off and the engineer will be killed, too'.

"John looked sideways at me and said, 'Yes, I know it'.

" 'You shouldn't have thought of putting them there,' I said.

" 'It was you who thought of it,' said John.

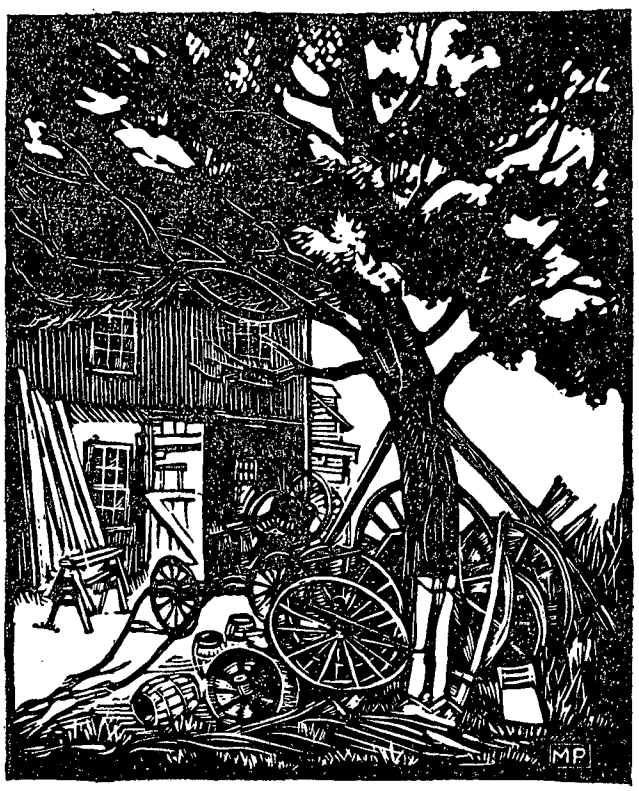
" 'By now the train may be almost there,' I said. 'I didn't think of it, either. It was you. I said that they could wreck trains. It was you who thought of really doing it.'

"We began to sweat and feel awful. We sort of slowed up, and then Brother John said, 'Shucks. Let's try and go back and get them off before the train comes'.

"So we turned around in the heat and ran back all that way. There was John's, but mine had rolled off down the side of the road. The track was empty, both ways.

"We were hungry and so we sat down and ate the eggs right then. The train didn't come that day. I guess sometimes they just didn't run, you know. And when we went on to the circus we got there so late that we could only see a little bit before we had to come back.

"So we missed pretty nearly everything that day."



Wheels by Mabel Pugh

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NEGRO POETS AND THEIR POETRY

By Wallace Thurman

JUPITER HAMMON, the first Negro in this country to write and publish poetry, was a slave owned by a Mr. Joseph Lloyd of Queens Village, Long Island. Hammon had been converted to the religion of Jesus Christ and all of his poems are religious exhortations, incoherent in thought and crudely executed. His first poem was published in 1761, his second, entitled "An Address to Miss Phillis Wheatley, Ethiopian Poetess in Boston, who came from Africa at eight years of age and soon became acquainted with the Gospel of Jesus Christ", in 1768.

This Miss Phillis Wheatley, who had been bought from a slave-ship by a family named Wheatley in Boston Harbor and educated by them, wrote better doggerel than her older contemporary Hammon. She knew Alexander Pope and she knew Ovid—Hammon only knew the Bible—and she knew Pope so well that she could write like a third-rate imitator of him. Phillis in her day was a museum figure who would have caused more of a sensation if some contemporary Barnum had exploited her. As it was she attracted so much attention that many soft hearted (and, in some cases, soft headed) whites and blacks have been lead to believe that her poetry deserves to be considered as something more than a mere historical relic. This is an excerpt from her best poem:

Imagination! who can sing thy force?
Or who describe the swiftness of thy course?
Soaring through the air to find the bright abode,
The empyreal palace of the thundering God,
We on thy pinions can surpass the wind,
And leave the rolling universe behind,
From star to star the mental optics rove,
Measure the skies, and range the realms above,
There in one view we grasp the mighty whole,
Or with new worlds amaze the unbounded soul.

She never again equalled the above, far less surpassed it. And most of the time she wrote as in the following excerpt from "On Major General Lee". (This poem would warm the heart of "Big Bill" Thompson of Chicago; he really should know about it.) A captured colonial soldier is addressing a British general:

O Arrogance of tongue!
And wild ambition, ever prone to wrong!
Believ'st thou, chief, that armies such as thine
Can stretch in dust that heaven defended line?
In vain allies may swarm from distant lands,
And demons aid in formidable bands,
Great as thou art, thou shun'st the field of fame,
Disgrace to Britain and the British name.

She continues in this vein, damning the British and enshrining the Americans until she reaches a climax in the following priceless lines:

Find in your train of boasted heroes, one
To match the praise of Godlike Washington.
Thrice happy chief in whom the virtues join,
And heaven taught prudence speaks the man divine.

Thomas Jefferson is quoted as saying that "Religion has produced a Phillis Wheatley, but it could not produce a poet. Her poems are beneath contempt". Nevertheless, Phillis had an interesting and exciting career. The Wheatleys carried her to London, where her first volume was published in 1773. She was exhibited at the Court of George III, and in the homes of the nobility much as the

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Negro poets of today are exhibited in New York drawing-rooms. She wrote little about slavery, which is not surprising considering that save for her epic trip across the Atlantic in a slave-ship, she had never known slavery in any form. She often mentioned her homeland and once spoke of herself as "Afric's muse", but she was more interested in the religion of Jesus Christ and in the spreading of piety than in any more worldly items, save perhaps in her patriotic interest for the cause of the American colonists.

Heretofore every commentator, whether white or black, when speaking of Phillis Wheatley, has sought to make excuses for her bad poetry. They have all pointed out that Phillis lived and wrote during the eighteenth century, when, to quote from the introduction to White and Jackson's "Poetry of American Negro Poets", "the great body of contemporary poetry was turgid in the style of debased Pope". It would be too much, they continue, to expect "a poet of Phillis Wheatley's rather conventional personality to rise above this influence". In his preface to "The Book of American Negro Poetry", James Weldon Johnson contends that "had she come under the influence of Wordsworth, Byron, Keats or Shelley, she would have done greater work". Does it smack too much of lese-majesty to suggest that perhaps Phillis wrote the best poetry she could have written under any influence, and that a mediocre imitation of Shelley would have been none the less mediocre than a mediocre imitation of Pope? Phillis was also influenced by the Bible, but her paraphrases of the scripture are just as poor as her paraphrases of "debased Pope".

Phillis died in 1784 and until Paul Lawrence Dunbar published his "Oak and Ivy", in 1892, American Negro poetry stayed at the level at which she had left it, although there must have been over one hundred Negroes who wrote and published poetry during this period. Most of them came into prominence during and after the Civil War, and were encouraged by abolitionists to write of their race and their race's trials. Frances Ellen Harper is probably the best of this period. One volume, "On Miscellaneous Subjects", was published with an introduction by William Lloyd Garrison. Over ten thousand copies were circulated. Mrs. Harper also wrote and published "Moses, a Story of the Nile", in verse covering fifty-two closely printed pages. Many of her contemporaries were equally ambitious. Length was a major poetic virtue to them.

It seems highly probable that these people wrote in verse because neither their minds nor their literary tools and backgrounds were adequate for the task of writing readable and intelligent prose. They could be verbose and emotional in verse, and yet attain a degree of coherence not attainable when they wrote in prose. George M. Horton is a good illustration. He was born a slave in Chatham County, North Carolina, in 1797. It is said that he "was not a good farm worker on account of devoting too much time to fishing, hunting and attending religious meetings". He taught himself to read with the aid of a Methodist hymn-book and a red-backed speller. In 1830 he secured work as a janitor at Chapel Hill, the seat of the University of South Carolina. Here he made extra money writing love poems for amorous students. Desiring to obtain his freedom and migrate to Liberia, Horton, aided by some of his white friends, published a volume of verse entitled "The Hope of Liberty", but the returns from the sale of this volume were not sufficient for his purpose. But he remained more or less a free agent, and was allowed to hire himself out instead of having to remain on his master's plantation. In 1865, a troop of Federal soldiers, who had been quartered in Chapel Hill, were ordered north. Horton left with them and went to Philadelphia where he eventually died.

Here is a sample of his prose: "By close application to my book and at night my visage became considerably emaciated by extreme perspiration, having no lucubratory apparatus, no candle, no lamp, not even lightwood, being chiefly raised in oaky woods". And here is a sample of his verse:

> Come liberty. Thou cheerful sound
> Roll through my ravished ears;
> Come, let my griefs in joy be drowned
> And drive away my fears.

Further comment would be superfluous.

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After the Civil War, the Negro found himself in a dilemma. He was supposed to be free, yet his condition was little changed. He was worse off in some respects than he had been before. It can be understood, then, that the more articulate Negroes of the day spent most of their time speculating upon this thing called freedom, both as it had been imagined and as it was in actuality.

However, none of the poetry written at this time is worthy of serious critical consideration. It was not even a poetry of protest. Although Negro poets objected to the mistreatment of their people, they did not formulate these objections in strong, biting language, but rather sought sympathy and pled for pity. They wept copiously but seldom manifested a fighting spirit. The truth is, only one American Negro poet has been a fighting poet, only one has really written revolutionary-protest poetry, and that is Claude McKay, who will be considered later.

Paul Lawrence Dunbar was the first American Negro poet whose work really merited critical attention. Dunbar was the son of two ex-slaves, both supposedly full-blooded Negroes, a fact flagrantly paraded by race purists, to controvert the prevalent Nordic theory that only Negroes with Caucasian blood in their veins ever accomplish anything. He was born in Dayton, Ohio, June 27th, 1872. His father had escaped from his master and fled to Canada, but later returned to the States and enlisted for military service during the Civil War in a Massachusetts regiment. Dunbar may have inherited his love for letters and writing from his mother, whose master had often read aloud in her presence.

Dunbar attended the public schools in his home town, and was graduated from the local high-school, where he had edited the school paper. Then he found employment as an elevator operator. In 1892 he delivered an address in verse to the Western Association of Writers, and shortly afterwards he published his first volume, "Oak and Ivy". In 1896, through the subscription method, he was able to publish another volume entitled, "Majors and Minors". William Dean Howells wrote a most favorable review of this volume and later paved the way for Dodd, Mead and Company to publish "Lyrics of Lowly Life", for which he wrote an introduction. Meanwhile Dunbar had visited England, and had become a great friend with Coleridge-Taylor, the Negro composer, with whom he collaborated on many songs. On his return to the United States, another friend, Robert G. Ingersoll, helped him to get a position in the Library of Congress. He was only able to keep this job two years, for meanwhile he had developed pulmonary tuberculosis, and despite pilgrimages to such lung-soothing climates as the Adirondacks, the Rockies, and Florida, he finally succumbed to the disease and died in Dayton, Ohio, on February 9, 1908.

From 1892 until the time of his death Dunbar published five volumes of verse, four volumes of collected short stories, and four novels. Not only was he the first Negro to write poetry which had real merit and could be considered as having more than merely sentimental or historical value, but he was also the first Negro poet to be emancipated from Methodism, the first American Negro poet who did not depend on a Wesleyan hymn-book for inspiration and vocabulary. Most of the poets preceding him were paragons of piety. They had all been seized upon by assiduous missionaries and put through the paces of Christianity, and their verses were full of puerile apostrophizing of the Almighty, and leaden allusions to Scriptural passages.

Yet Dunbar was far from being a great poet. First of all, he was a rank sentimentalist, and was content to let surface values hold his interest. He attempted to interpret the soul of his people, but as William Stanley Braithwaite has said, he succeeded "only in interpreting a folk temperament". And although he was, as William Dean Howells affirmed, the first "man of pure African blood of American civilization to feel Negro life aesthetically and express it lyrically", neither his aesthetic feeling nor his expression ever attained enough depth to be of permanent value.

Dunbar is famous chiefly for his dialect poetry. Yet he often regretted that the world turned to praise "a jingle in a broken

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tongue". He was ambitious to experiment in more classical forms, and to deal with something less concrete than the "smile through your tears" plantation-darky of reconstruction times. Here perhaps was his greatest limitation. Being anxious to explore the skies, he merely skimmed over the surface of the earth.

After Dunbar, there was a whole horde of Negro poets, who like him, wrote in dialect. The sum total of their achievement is zero, but happily, in addition to these parasitic tyros there were also two new poets who had more originality and more talent than their contemporaries. And though neither of these men produced anything out of the ordinary, they did go beyond the minstrel humor and peasant pathos of Dunbar, and beyond the religious cant and doggerel jeremiads of Dunbar's predecessors. One of these men, William Stanley Braithwaite, is best known as a student and friend of poets and poetry rather than as a poet. He has yearly, since 1913, issued an anthology of American magazine verse, and has also published some academic studies of English literature.

The second, James Weldon Johnson, achieved little as a poet until recently, when he published "God's Trombones", a volume of Negro sermons done in verse. His first volume, "Fifty Years And Other Poems", contains little of merit. The title poem, which recounts in verse the progress of the race from 1863 to 1913, has, because of its propagandist content, been acclaimed as a great poem. No comment or criticism is necessary of this opinion when part of the poem itself can be quoted:

> Far, far, the way that we have trod
> From heathen trails and jungle dens
> To freedmen, freedmen, sons of God,
> Americans and citizens.

Mr. Johnson, it seems, has also been fairly intimate with Methodist hymn books.

His sermon poems, while at times awkward and faulty in technique, have an ecstatic eloquence and an individual rhythm which immediately place them among the best things any Negro has ever done in poetry. Although this may not be saying much, and although, as a poet Mr. Johnson may not be adequate to the task of fully realizing the promise of these sermon poems, he has at least laid a foundation upon which a new generation of Negro poets can build. He will have to be remembered as something more than just a historical or sentimental figure. He, like Dunbar, is an important, if a minor bard; and if the Negro poet of the future is to make any individual contribution to American literature he must derive almost as much from the former's "God's Trombones" as from the latter's "Lyrics of Lowly Life".

To consider all the Negro poets who since 1913 have lifted up their voices in song would necessitate using an entire issue of any journal. It is not only an impossible task but one not worth the time and space it would require. For our present study we will touch only the high spots, passing over such people as Fenton Johnson, whose early promise has never been fulfilled; Joseph Cotter, Jr., who, it is alleged by most critics in this field, would have been a great poet had he lived but whose extant work belies this judgment; Georgia Douglas Johnson, whose highly sentimental and feminine lyrics have found favor; Arna Bontemp, who specializes in monotonous and wordy mystic evocations which lack fire and conviction, and Helene Johnson, who alone of all the younger group seems to have the "makings" of a poet.

But taking up the contemporary triumvirate—McKay, Cullen, and Hughes—all of whom have had volumes published by reputable houses and are fairly well known to the poetry-reading public, we have poets of another type. Each one of them represents a different trend in Negro literature and life.

Claude McKay was born in Jamaica, British West Indies, where he received his elementary education, served a while in the constabulary, and wrote his first poems. A friend financed his journey to America to finish his scholastic work, but McKay found himself at odds with the second-rate schools he attended here, and finally fled to New York City where he became a member of the old *Masses, Seven Arts, Liberator* group of radicals and artists. During this period he received a legacy which, he tells us, was

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spent in riotous living. Broke, he attempted to make a living by washing dishes, operating elevators, doing porter work—the usual occupations engaged in by Negro artists and intellectuals.

McKay's first volume was published while he was still in Jamaica, a compilation of folk-verse done in the native dialect. The Institute of Arts and Science of Jamaica gave him a medal in recognition of this first book. It is in many ways remarkable, and in it the poet gives us a more substantial portrait and delves far deeper into the soul of the Jamaican than Dunbar was ever able to in the soul of the southern Negro in America.

McKay's latter poetry is often marred by bombast. He is such an intense person that one can often hear the furnace-like fire within him roaring in his poems. He seems to have more emotional depth and spiritual fire than any of his forerunners or contemporaries. It might be added that he also seems to have considerably more mental depth too. His love poems are not as musical or as haunting as Mr. Cullen's, but neither are they as stereotyped. His sonnet to a Harlem dancer may not be as deft or as free from sentiment as "Midnight Nan" by Langston Hughes, but it is far more mature and moving. All of which leads us to say that a study of Claude McKay's and of the other better Negro poetry convinces us that he, more than the rest, has really had something to say. It is his tragedy that his message was too alive and too big for the form he chose. His poems are for the most part either stilted, choked, or overzealous. He could never shape the flames from the fire that blazed within him. But he is the only Negro poet who ever wrote revolutionary or protest poetry. Hence:

If we must die, let it be not like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,

. . . . .

Oh, Kinsman! We must meet the common foe;
Though far outnumbered, let us still be brave,
And for their thousand blows, deal one death blow!
What though before us lies the open grave?
Like men we'll face the murderous pack,
Pressed to the wall, dying—but fighting back.

There is no impotent whining here, no mercy-seeking prayer to the white man's God, no mournful jeremiad, no "ain't it hard to be a nigger", no lamenting of or apologizing for the fact that he is a member of a dark-skinned minority group. Rather he boasts:

Be not deceived, for every deed you do,
I could match—out match; Am I not Africa's son,
Black of that black land where black deeds are done?

This is propaganda poetry of the highest order although it is crude and inexpert. Contrast it with these lines from Countee Cullen's sonnet "From The Dark Tower":

We shall not always plant while others reap
The golden increment of bursting fruit,
Nor always countenance abject and mute
That lesser men should hold their brothers cheap.

Countee Cullen is the symbol of a fast disappearing generation of Negro writers. In him it reaches its literary apogee. On the other hand Langston Hughes announces the entrance of a new generation, while Claude McKay, glorious revolutionary that he is, remains uncatalogued. For two generations Negro poets have been trying to do what Mr. Cullen has succeeded in doing. First, trying to translate into lyric form the highly poetic urge to escape from the blatant realities of life in America into a vivid past, and, second, fleeing from the stigma of being called a *Negro* poet, by, as Dunbar so desired to do, ignoring folk-material and writing of such abstractions as love and death.

There is hardly anyone writing poetry in America today who can make the banal sound as beautiful as does Mr. Cullen. He has an extraordinary ear for music, a most extensive and dexterous knowledge of words and their values, and an enviable understanding of conventional poetic forms. Technically, he is almost precocious, and never, it may be added, far from the academic; but he is also

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too steeped in tradition, too influenced mentally by certain conventions and taboos. When he does forget these things as in his greatest poem, "Heritage":

What is Africa to me:
Copper sun or scarlet sea,
Jungle star or jungle track,
Strong bronzed men, or regal black
Women from whose loins I sprang
When the birds of Eden sang?
One three centuries removed
From the scenes his fathers loved,
Spicy grove, cinnamon tree,
What is Africa to me?

and the unforgettable:

All day long and all night through,
One thing only must I do:
Quench my pride and cool my blood,
Lest I perish in the flood,
Lest a hidden ember set
Timber that I thought was wet
Burning like the dryest flax,
Melting like the merest wax,
Lest the grave restore its dead,
Not yet has my heart and head
In the least way realized
They and I are civilized.

or his (to illustrate another tendency):

I climb, but time's
Abreast with me;
I sing, but he climbs
With my highest C.

And in other far too few instances he reaches heights no other Negro poet has ever reached, placing himself high among his contemporaries, both black or white. But he has not gone far enough. His second volume is not as lush with promise or as spontaneously moving as his first. There has been a marking time or side-stepping rather than a marching forward. If it seems we expect too much from this poet, we can only defend ourselves by saying that we expect no more than the poet's earlier work promises.

Mr. Cullen's love poems are too much made to order. His race poems, when he attempts to paint a moral, are inclined to be sentimental and stereotyped. It is when he gives vent to the pagan spirit and lets it inspire and dominate a poem's form and context that he does his most impressive work His cleverly turned rebellious poems are also above the ordinary. But there are not enough of these in comparison to those poems which are banal, though beautiful.

Langston Hughes has often been compared to Dunbar. At first this comparison seems far-fetched and foolish, but on closer examination one finds that the two have much in common, only that where Dunbar failed, Langston Hughes succeeds. Both set out to interpret "the soul of his race"; one failed, the other, just at the beginning of his career, has in some measure already succeeded.

The younger man has not been content to assemble a supply of stock types who give expression to stock emotions which may be either slightly amusing or slightly tragic, but which are never either movingly tragic or convincingly comic. When Langston Hughes writes of specific Negro types he manages to make them more than just ordinary Negro types. They are actually dark-skinned symbols of universal characters. One never feels this way about the people in Dunbar's poetry. For he never heightens them above their own particular sphere. There is never anything of the universal element in his poems that motivates Mr. Hughes's.

Moreover, Langston Hughes has gone much farther in another direction than any other Negro poet, much farther even than James Weldon Johnson went along the same road in "God's Trombones". He has appropriated certain dialects and rhythms characteristically Negroid as his poetic properties. He has borrowed the lingo and locutions of migratory workers, chamber-maids, porters, boot-blacks, and others, and woven them into rhythmic schemes borrowed from the blues songs, spirituals and jazz and with them created a poetic diction and a poetic form all his own. There is danger in this of course, for the poet may and often does, consider these things as an end in themselves rather than as a means to an end. A blues poem such as:

I'm a bad, bad man
'Cause everybody tells me so.
I'm a bad, bad man,
Everybody tells me so.
I takes ma meaness and ma licker
Everywhere I go.

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or:

Ma sweet good man has
Packed his trunk and left.
Ma sweet good man has
Packed his trunk and left.
Nobody to love me:
I'm gonna kill ma self.

may be poignant and colorful but the form is too strait-laced to allow much variety of emotion or context. The poems produced are apt to prove modish and ephemeral. But when this blues form is expanded, as in:

Drowning a drowsy syncopated tune,
Racking back and forth to a mellow croon,
I heard a Negro play.
Down on Lenox Avenue the other night
By the pale dull pallor of an old gas light
He did a lazy sway
He did a lazy sway
To the tune o' those Weary Blues.
With his ebony hands on each ivory key
He made that poor piano moan with melody.
O Blues!
Swaying to and fro on his rickety stool
He played that sad raggy tune like a musical fool.
Sweet Blues!
Coming from a black man's soul.

the poet justifies his experiment, and finds at the same time the most felicitous and fruitful outlet for his talent.

Mr. Hughes, where his race is concerned, is perfectly objective. He is one of them so completely that he, more than any other Negro poet, realizes that after all they are human beings; usually the articulate Negro either regards them as sociological problems or as debased monstrosities. To Mr. Hughes, certain types of Negroes and their experiences are of permanent value. He is not afraid of, nor does he ignore, them. He can calmly say:

Put on yo' red silk stockings,
Black gal.
Go an' let de white boys
Look at yo' legs.
. . . . .
An' tomorrow's chile'll
Be a high yaller.

or:

My old man's a white old man
And my old mother's black
. . . . .
My old man died in fine big house.
My ma died in a shack.
I wonder where I'm gonna die,
Being neither white nor black?

and reach the heights of his achievement in "Mulatto", one of the finest and most vivid poems written in the past few years. But Mr. Hughes has also written some of the most banal poetry of the age, which has not, as in the case of Mr. Cullen, even sounded beautiful.

The future of Negro poetry is an unknown quantity, principally because those on whom its future depends are also unknown quantities. There is nothing in the past to crow about, and we are too close to the present to judge it more than tentatively. McKay is exiled in France, an alien and a communist, barred from returning to this country. Once in a while a poem of his appears, but the period of his best work in this field seems to be at an end. Langston Hughes and Countee Cullen are both quite young, as poets and as individuals. Neither can be placed yet, nor can their contributions be any more than just intelligently commented upon. Whether they are going or will continue to go in the right direction is no more than a matter of individual opinion. All of us do know that as yet the American Negro has not produced a great poet. Whether he will or not is really not at all important. What does matter is that those who are now trying to be great should get intelligent guidance and appreciation. They seem to have everything else except perhaps the necessary genius.

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Sights and Sounds

IN DEFENCE OF MUSICAL COMEDY

By Ernest Boyd

AS this article goes to press, dramatic critics in New York are cheerfully counting the days before the end of the theatrical season and gleefully despatching with words of savage contempt the few plays which raise their feeble heads for a night or two and are gone. It is the time when strange dramatic fowl emerge, after futile tryouts and changes of title, only to die ignominiously for their temerity in thus delaying the departure from town of the weary gentlemen who have all winter long devoted their evenings—or most of them—to the theater.

If one asks why there are so many bad plays at the end of the season, the answer usually is that they could not find houseroom earlier, but get a chance to slip into theaters from which have disappeared ventures upon which higher hopes were set. That in itself is an admission that the production of failures is not a sport exclusively reserved for the months of May and June, but somehow a "flop" in December or January is attended with more pomp than in the Spring. Presumably because the date of a play's production gives some inkling to the initiated of what they may expect, and blossom-time is a time of frost in the theater.

At the time of writing, forty-four plays, or thereabouts, are running in New York. Of these, according to the experts of *Variety*, only about twenty will last into the summer, and more than half of these are musical shows—a high rate of mortality, particularly for the legitimate drama. I will not quote the statistics of the experts aforesaid as to the gross receipts of the various plays, except to say that the highest figures for such popular successes as "The Royal Family" and "The Bachelor Father" are less than half those of "Show Boat" and "The Three Musketeers", and the minimum for a musical play, if it is to last, is the maximum for the others.

From all of this it is possible to deduce the perhaps not alarming fact that revues and musical plays are more in demand than comedy or drama. So much so that the tradition as to the end of the season being reserved for failures is not held to apply to musical shows. While ineffable melodramas and farces are opened and disappear into limbo with the speed of gin bottles at a literary party, "Scandals" and "Follies" and musical comedies rise on the tide of popular success. Wherefore, the query arises: if, as is alleged, people will not go to the theater in the summer, why will they go to the theaters where musical shows are offered? Is it possible that they go to the theater when there is something on which they really want to see?

This seems to me more probable and more human than the explanations usually offered: that it is too warm; that too many people are out of town, and so forth. Save for possible facilities in refrigerating, hitherto confined, so far as I know, to the movies, a theater in which "Show Boat" is playing is no cooler than one in which "The Royal Family" is being performed. And if there are more people in town for the one than the other, it is the attraction itself which has held them or brought them there. It is also an interesting fact that it is generally a little cooler in a theater than outside, on a hot summer night in the city. I am afraid the weather cannot be held responsible. Either musical shows are, as a rule, better than the other kind or people think they are, which, from a box-office point of view, amounts to the same thing.

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Apart from the box-office, I am inclined to believe that the public is right. In long years of playgoing I can recall very few musical shows as bad as the worst plays I have seen, and few plays as good *of their kind* as the best musical plays I have seen. As a pleasant substitute for cross-word puzzles and guessing games, I suggest that any group of people with, say, twenty or twenty-five years of theater-going behind them can test this for themselves by trying to remember as many plays seen during that period as musical comedies or revues. Between 1900 and 1925 I can remember scores of the latter, including the music, but of legitimate plays a few only come to mind, and they are chiefly the work of a restricted number of major dramatists: Shaw, Pinero, Galsworthy, Somerset Maugham, and the like. But author and play alike have faded into oblivion in the case of innumerable plays which had a degree of success in their day.

The reason they are forgotten is very simple: they were inferior to the musical shows. They did not succeed so well as the latter in doing what they aimed to do. The average play, in this respect, is very much like the average novel. It is not first-rate of its kind, or even second-rate: therefore it has a shorter lease of life than a biography, or even a bibliography, which may become immortal because of its usefulness. Yet, there are lots of people who think that they are being more intellectual when they see a banal comedy than when they watch an excellent show like "Good News". It is they, undoubtedly, who welcome the summer as an excuse for doing anything rather than go to the theater.

The author of a musical show is usually of minor importance, save in the rare case of Gilbert and Sullivan. Even the lyrics may be pretty poor, although not necessarily or preferably so, but the show will succeed in spite of them, if it has good tunes, good dancing, pretty girls, principals who know how to sing, and comedians who know how to be humorous. In other words, when the essence of the entertainment depends upon the people of the theater themselves, and not upon something that sounded very well to the author when he read it to his wife. I never see a musical play without noticing how much better everyone is, in his or her particular capacity, than in the ordinary comedy or drama. The people who put on this production know their own business thoroughly, is my reflection.

At the "Greenwich Village Follies", at the Winter Garden, for instance, which is not a particularly brilliant show, there is enough to provide a very agreeable evening's entertainment. Doctor Rockwell is a diverting comedian; there is an amusing burlesque of an evening at the radio; and two troupes of dancers—not too Tillerish—add rhythm and movement to the scene. Miss Laura Lee contrives with "Get Your Man" to give some swing to a score which lacks outstanding numbers. The vocal rendering of the scene, "The Trials and Tribulations of Mary Dugan", is an effective skit.

A musical comedy which should rival "Hit the Deck" and "Good News" is "Present Arms", at the Mansfield Theater. The ensemble work is superb, and the chorus dances with a vigor unsurpassed by the astonishing young people in "Good News". A recruit from the night clubs, I believe, Miss Demaris Dore, gets her chance in a song called "Crazy Elbows", which is one of the outstanding numbers in a goodly selection, such as "You Took Advantage of Me", in which the two captivating principals, Miss Joyce Barbour and Miss Flora Le Breton, shared the effects and the applause. Miss Le Breton and Mr. Charles King likewise scored a hit in "Do I Hear You?", which is bound to be on every phonograph and in every cabaret and roadhouse this summer. There is even a semblance of actual humor in the plot—that much derided and chiefly superfluous element in musical comedy—which hinges on the efforts of some English in Hawaii to speak American and to persuade themselves that a very tough Marine is a perfect American gentleman.

"Here's Howe!", at the Broadhurst Theater, music by Roger Wolfe Kahn, proved to be a moderately entertaining show, greatly helped by Ben Bernie and his orchestra. Miss Irene Delroy and Mr. Allen Kearns supplied the beauty and romance requisite to the occasion, and the audience

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was caught by the engaging numbers, "Imagination" and "Captivating Rhythm". On the principle already outlined in general terms, I should say that a visit to "Here's Howe!" and "Present Arms" is a safer bet than to most of the serious plays which have so far survived.

Failing these, Miss Mae West in her own masterpiece, "Diamond Lil", described as "A New Drama of the Underworld", can be recommended warmly. It is an irresistible piece of nonsense, costumed in the styles of thirty years ago, and enlivened by a rendering of "Frankie and Johnny" and the best incidental music of the period. The settings are as lurid as the melodrama, which reaches its climax when Diamond Lil covers the dead body of the rival she has stabbed by letting down her hair and combing it, as the police break in. In "London Nights in the Gay Nineties", Shaw Desmond has raised the rather ingenuous question: where are the ample bosoms of that time? He should see "Diamond Lil" and discover what the corset could and can still do to the female form.

The more profound efforts of the moment deserve mention only to continue the argument with which I started. "The Father", by August Strindberg, and Andreyev's "Waltz of the Dogs", will hardly exist when these lines appear. Both are gloomy and morbid, and both were played for all the morbidity and gloom that were in them. If the Andreyev play has been consistently passed over by such an organization as the Theater Guild, it is for the excellent reason that it is a poor piece of work, by an author whose slender talents were best expressed in fiction. Strindberg presents a different problem. Has he ever had a really successful production in English? I doubt it.

Bernard Shaw, it will be recalled has devoted his Nobel Prize money to a fund for the encouragement of translations from the Swedish, and has specially mentioned Strindberg as a genius lost to the English-speaking world through inadequate translation. A recent production of a play by Strindberg in London drew forth an official protest from the Swedish representative against the mutilation of a foreign masterpiece. Whether the version used was that of the American Edwin Björkman, or the rival English translation, I could not discover. The fact that such a protest can be made, and that a writer and dramatist of Strindberg's eminence in Northern and Central Europe has never attained to the position of an Ibsen or a Hauptmann in this country or in England is a curious commentary on the freakishness of our reception of foreign authors.

It was unanimously agreed that "The Father" was butchered, but the question remains: would a good cast and a good translation ever make that merciless analysis of domestic misery acceptable? Even O'Neill failed to convince us in "Welded". There is a certain kind of conjugal ignominy which we apparently prefer to laugh at, as we do in musical comedy, or conceal, as we do in real life, either by divorce or acquiescence. Only in the case histories of the psychoanalysts and psychiatrists do we Anglo-Saxons reveal the psychic trauma which Strindberg examines in "The Father". It is true, Strindberg enjoyed the benefits of divorce, but psycho-anaylsis was unknown to him, so he had to diagnose his own maladies, which always resolved themselves into one: the Eternal Feminine.

Somebody should compile an American philosophy of life and sex from the quips and allusions of our leading comedians. In my experience, if we allow our sentimentalities to be titillated by "Dreaming of You", "Sometimes I'm Happy" and "Do I Hear You", we are equally soothed by the bland cynicism which underlies most of the dialogue and many of the scenes in our musical shows. There is a worldly wisdom and a disillusionment in the utterances of these popular figures which is irreconcilable with the popularity of a Dr. Frank Crane. If it is the "spirit of Broadway", then Broadway seems to speak for thousands who do not even live on the island of which it is so small if loud a part. Perhaps that is why stern moralists object to the theater. It is a school of wisdom, and it is not the kind of wisdom they want broadcasted. Let me make a nation's musical comedies, and let who will, make its laws.

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"BALLADS, SONGS AND SNATCHES"

By Abbe Niles

RABBIT BROWN, colored, sang to his guitar in the streets of New Orleans, and he rowed you out into Lake Ponchartrain for a fee, and sang to you as he rowed. It is the pleasant occupation of Ralph S. Peer to go on expeditions throughout the South, looking for such as Rabbit, and inducing them to sing their songs for Victor records on the spot. You may hear Brown's own song of the Titanic, secured by Peer, on Victor record 35840, and you should do so, for his work has character. But as he is not easy to understand, and as this department is collecting songs of the Titanic, I transcribe it in full:

'Twas on the ten of April, on a sunny afternoon
The Titanic left South Hamilton, each as happy as bride and groom.
Noone thought of dangier, or what their fate may be,
Ontell a gruesome iceburig cost fifteen hundred perished in the sea.

It was earily Monday morning, just about the break of day,
Captain Smith called for help from the Carpathia, and it was many miles away,
Everyone was cawm an' silent, asked each other what that trouble may be;
Not thinking that death was looiking, there upon that Northern sea.

The Carpathia received the wi'less, "S O. S., in distress,
Come at once, we are sinking, make no delay and do your bes'.
Get your lifeboats all in readiness, 'cause we're goin' down very fast.
We have saved the women and children, and try to hold out to the last."

You know, at last they called on the passengers, told 'em to hurry to the deck;
Then they realized that the mighty Titanic would undoubtedly be a wreck.
They lowe'd lifeboats one by one, takin' women an' children from the stawt—
The po' men they were left to care for themself, but they sho' played a hero's pawt.

You know, they stood out on that sinkin' deck, and they was all in great despair;
You know, accidents may happen most any time, an' we know not when an' where;
The music played as they went down, on that dark blue sea,
An' you could hear the sound of that familiar hymn, singin' Nero my Gawd to Thee:

"Nero my Gawd to Thee, Nero my Gawd to Thee,
Nero my Gawd to Thee, Nero to Thee!
Though like a wanderer, as the sun goes down,
Thou wilt be over me—" Just then the Titanic went down.

Three men and three women known as The English Singers have for the last two winters sat around a table on various American stages, and poured forth without accompaniment the riches of the Elizabethan madrigals and ballets and of the English and Scotch folk-songs. Elbert Hubbard's Roycrofters have now made twelve recordings on twelve discs, of the cream of these singers' repertoire, and they are obtainable for $1.50 each from the sole distributor, Wm. H. Wise & Co., 50 West 47th St., New York. This is a major achievement in the history of American recording, and you will not in a long day hear such harmony and polyphony from human voices as have thus been made available. The best course that I can suggest is either to order the lot, or to order the record of the magic "Corpus Christi" and "The Holly and the Ivy", the record of "The Turtle Dove" and "Sing We and Chant It", and the record of "Ca' the Yowes" and "Though Amaryllis Dance"—and ask for a catalogue.

Mr. Walter Damrosch, 1926, announcing George Gershwin's piano concerto in F, commissioned by him and played under his direction by the New York Symphony:

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"Lady Jazz, adorned with her intriguing rhythms, has danced her way around the world . . . But for all her travels and her sweeping popularity, she has encountered no knight who could lift her to a level that would enable her to be received as a respectable member in musical circles.

George Gershwin seems to have accomplished this miracle. . . . Yet he has not detracted one whit from her fascinating personality."

Mr. Damrosch, 1928, in an address before the Music Supervisors' national conference as reported in the New York Times:

"Jazz is a monotony of rhythm. It is rhythm without music and without soul. Personally, it annoys me . . . Jazz is quite unsatisfactory to any intelligent person."

This perplexes me. Mr. Damrosch is not an unsympathetic character such as the parson in "Rain". Yet even that reverend gentleman, when he failed either to make a lady out of Sadie Thompson, or to make that lady his, refrained from abusing her; he just went gloomily out back and bumped himself off.

The following Bremen songs beat the flyers to Broadway: "Well, the Irish and the Germans Got Together"; "They Landed Over Here from Over There" (*"Germany and Ireland too Will get their Yankee Doodle Due"*); "Fitzmaurice, Von Huenefeld and Kohl"—getting those names in was the proud achievement of Jean Herbert or Al Koppell; "Let's Give Three Cheers"; "When Birds of a Feather Get Together" (*"Three little birds in a flying nest, Three little pilots whom God has blessed"*); "Mitchell Field or Heaven"; and "Sky Birds"; the last two by Capt. Kohl's uncle. I favor the last, which is the solitary waltz, and the first, which like all the rest is a march. Why could not someone have been reckless enough to try ragtime?

I wish to introduce Annette Hanshaw, who has a soft, agreeable, sportive contralto that makes little excursions into an independent upper register, and most particularly puts over the livelier popular songs. She has made many good Perfect records, and for a starter I recommend the two that contain "I Just Roll Along" and "Lila". Meet also, Jimmy Rodgers singing "Down on the Mountain" and his engaging, melodious and bloodthirsty "Blue Yodel" (*Vic.*), wherein he says in part:

If you don't want me, mama, you sho' don't have to stall,
'Cause I can git mo' women than a passenger train can haul.
I'm gonna buy me a pistol just as long as I'm tall, Lawd, Lawd,
*I'm gonna shoot po' Thelma, just to see her jump an' fall.**

Please hear Willard Robison play and sing his own "'Tain't So, Honey" (*Perf.*). Hear Victoria Spivey (colored) and her plaintive squeals in "Your Worries Ain't like Mine" and "A Good Man's Hard to Find" (*Ok.*). In "After my Laughter Came Tears" (*Brun.*), Miss Vaughn de Leath does laugh, long and haughtily; but after . . . Sam Manning and the Caribbean Serenaders, colored, are a strange case that will bear looking into, beginning with the fox-trot "You Can't Get Anything out of Me" (*Ok.*). Admirers of Joe Venuti's peculiar jazz, and other curious ones, might listen to his "Dinah" and "Wild Dog" (*Ok.*). Martha Copeland (colored), who knocked them kicking at W. C. Handy's Carnegie Hall recital, has recorded "Wylie Avenue Blues" (*Col.*). It's in Pittsburgh. Fats Waller, Jimmy Johnson, and Jabbo Smith, who mistreated the pianos and the organ at the same affair are all members of the Louisiana Sugar Babes, who just recorded the fox-trots "Sippi" and "Willow Tree" (*Vic.*). Till further notice, I am mentioning fox-trot records. Duke Ellington's superb colored orchestra from the Cotton Club in Harlem uses a heavy dark singing undertow, while above, a clarinet or trumpet stabs and lashes about like a cobra with its tail nailed to the floor; thus, in "Take it Easy" (*Brun.*). Next hottest is "Buffalo Blues" (*Col.*), in which Johnny Dunn's colored band at times unites in a terrific bloodcurdling "Ya-ah!", representing, I believe, a new step in instrumental articulation; the previous step was "wa". Third hot: the Sugar Babies in a re-

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markable version of "Waitin' for Katy" and "She's the Sweetheart of Six Other Guys" (*Ok.*). The pretty picture on "Six Other Guys" (piano copy) is the same that adorned "Bessie Couldn't Help It" in 1925. Efficiency experts? Fourth: "Shadowland Blues", a slow fox-trot in two parts by Troy Floyd's Orchestra (*Ok.*), and fifth, Ted Lewis' "Hello Montreal", which is backed by the waltz "Laugh, Clown, Laugh" (*Col.*). In milder mood, dance to the following excellent records: Arnold Johnson's of "Ma Belle" and "March of the Musketeers" (*Brun.*); Paul Ash's of "My Pet" and "Dolores" (*Col.*); Ben Selvin's of "Speedy Boy" and "Sunrise" (*Col.*); Frankie Trumbauer's of "Lila" and "Our Bungalow of Dreams" (*Ok.*); Arnold Johnson's of "Say So" and "O Gee, O Joy" (*Brun.*), and Ben Bernie's of "Imagination" and "Crazy Rhythm" (*Brun.*). A good slow waltz record is "I Can't Do Without You" and "Auf Wiedersehn" by the Royal Music Makers with Seger Ellis singing (*Ok.*), but you shouldn't pronounce "Wie—" as "oui", mein herr. *Novelties:* crave you Hawaiian singing, try "He Manao Healoha", or words to that effect, by Kalama's Quartette (*Ok.*). "Twilight Echoes" (*Vic.*) combines a guitar and an octachorda, which sounds like another guitar, a pretty good thing to sound like.

In the interests of space, any sheet music hereafter mentioned in this place must be powerful good, or accompanied by a substantial bribe. *Fox-trots:* "I Can't Give You Anything but Love" (from "Blackbirds of 1928"), with a strong off-beat rhythm, is of the best of the season. "I Think of what You Used to Think of Me" is also extra good; this and "A Night for Meditation" carry a singing melody in both hands. "Giggling Gertie" is pretty silly, but if "F'Rinstance" reaches the campuses before final exams, nobody will pass. Walter Donaldson is the works and the goods in "Say Yes—Today". "I'm Feelin' Devilish", about which I let off pinwheels in February, is now published. I only know the title of "When Banana Skins are Falling I'll Come Sliding Back to You". The sorrowful chirps of "Who's to Blame" will infest the summer nights. "I Saw You Smile" employs the "three against two" rhythms that so embarrassed some recording ar-tusts in "Coquette". "Hurry On" is a good tune, while as it flats the seventh, closes on the fifth and carries its melody in the bass, it is an unusual one as they go. Have you noted the Dorian (or is it Aeolian) effect obtained by Richard Rodgers toward the end of the verse in "I'm a Fool"? See also "I'm Writing You this Little Melody", and "Just a Little Way from Home". *Waltzes:* with free legal advice—"If You Can't Tell the World She's a Good Little Girl, Just Say Nothing at All"—or if you are a good little girl, "Go Home, Little Girl, Go Home", for

You're chasing a rainbow that doesn't exist,
When you lose your laughter, you'll never be missed.

And by the way, Mr. Jerome Kern of Bronxville, N. Y., has written the finest Viennese waltz since "The Dollar Princess", "The Count of Luxembourg", "The Merry Widow", and those. It is "You Are Love", in "Show Boat", and has not at this writing been printed outside of the complete score. But one should have the complete score. *Piano jazz:* Rube Bloom is a melodist and a jazzist, and "Sapphire" demonstrates that the two can beautifully collaborate. I understand that Bloom makes piano records for Harmony, and shall investigate. Walter Feldkamp, another phenomenal pianist, offers a good time to anyone who manages tenths in the left hand, in "What a Pity". And, with a sore finger, I mention "Tin Ear".

Best Sellers in Popular Music

The following list, in order of popularity as of May 31st, is furnished by the courtesy of Crown Music Co., leading New York jobbers. "W" indicates waltzes.

Ramona (W)	Together (W)	My Angel
Laugh, Clown, Laugh! (W)	Beautiful	After my Laughter Came Tears
Girl of my Dreams (W)	My Ohio Home	Back in your own Back Yard
Chloe	Beloved	There Must be a Silver Lining
Was it a Dream? (W)	Little Log Cabin of Dreams (W)	Happy-Go-Lucky Lane

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NOVELS TO THE FORE

By William McFee

IT is very rare for a reviewer to express gratitude for the cordial assistance nowadays extended to him to lighten the heavy cross of criticism. Time was when a man had no more than the book and his own wit to go by, when he measured maiden efforts by masterpieces which have stood the test of time. Progress, which in this country, according to Lady Oxford's *bon mot,* has outrun civilization, has affected the habits of reviewers. Nowadays, if we are smart, we measure the masterpieces by the maiden efforts.

These gentle thoughts are evoked by the jacket of Margery Latimer's novel *We Are Incredible* (Sears, $2.00). This, mind you, is a first edition, a reviewer's copy of a book at this moment taking off. Feeling painfully superfluous, the reviewer learns from Joseph Hergesheimer that "We Are Incredible" is "extraordinarily alive". It is "splendid and bitter and unsentimental and thoroughly rebellious". (Where, mutters the reviewer, is that other rebellious novel by a young woman that only the other day started with a hullaballoo because her father had written the send-off?) He learns from Burton Rascoe that Miss Latimer is headed for "a distinguished career in the field of fiction". He listens humbly while Jesse Lynch Williams points out "a remarkable story, fine workmanship" in a "strange haunting book". He grows confused as Lewis Mumford drags in Hawthorne and Miss Latimer in a dubious left-handed compliment. And finally he crouches shuddering while Genevieve Taggard describes neurotic young Americans gleaming and vanishing against a crude and vital background. Miss Taggard goes so far as to put Miss Latimer beyond Katharine Mansfield, for the significance of her story "is more than individual".

What, in such a situation, can a reviewer do? He is evidently facing a crisis. Miss Latimer, with a single bound, is alongside of Aristophanes, Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë and Anatole France. It is true that Zona Gale, to whom the book is dedicated, in her foreword inside the jacket-flap, stipulates that Miss Latimer's future depends somewhat upon her vision keeping up with her power, but this reviewer has no confidence that this is really necessary. Miss Latimer, apparently, has been selected by her fellow novelists as their Queen o' the May.

In spite of the orchestral praise already quoted, one is inclined to doubt whether anybody is going to like this book very much, so that he or she keeps it on a bedside-table to read again and again. Miss Latimer deals in a cleverly unpleasant manner with an entirely unpleasant group of nonentities. "We Are Incredible" is a brilliant example of a type of novel of which we have had many in recent years. It is not easy to describe it save that it is so saturated with sex that a person of normal experience has the sensation, after reading it, of coming up out of a psychiatrist's filing-cabinet. Miss Latimer's men and women are all abnormal. Even Myrtle Fry is abnormal in her appalling commonness. Dora, when she is with Mr. Mitchell, the neurotic dipsomaniac hero, feels a wound opening between her breasts. Hester Lynden, the sinister Puritan virgin who dominates the story, is not entirely credible as a portrait of a wealthy spinster. This opinion, that "We Are Incredible" is just that, is advanced in all humility by the present reviewer. One does feel that Miss Latimer has done nothing to make us less incredible. To use a phrase once common in vulgar circles, she makes us afraid to live. She does indeed take the joy out of life.

In this she is ably seconded by Susan Glaspell, whose *Brook Evans* (Stokes, $2.50) is another of those merciless analyses of Mid-Western morals. One has an irresistible desire to know what modifications these novels

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would undergo had their authors never read any books on psycho-analysis. Bearing in mind Lady Oxford's wholesome aphorism, that "critics fail to convince when their opinions become obsessions", this reviewer persists in believing that the writer of fiction who reads up his psychology in Freud and Jung is laboring under a fallacy. When Mrs. Glaspell shows us Brook, the beautiful bastard child of Naomi Evans, turning against her mother because that unhappy woman wishes her to marry Tony, we feel the cold hand of the psycho-analyst on our breasts. All would be well if Brook experienced a genuine religious impulse when she went to Europe with the missionary. But Brook has nothing of the kind. Her intense moral indignation with her mother is hokum. She proceeds to Europe and has a good time, marries once or twice and has a grown-up son. She becomes one of those dreadful creatures who remain (in novels) gloriously young and are complimented by their sons. "Mother, you are lovely!" he cries. In a fallen world young men may say such things. One is sorry to know it.

"Brook Evans" reads like a play at times, which is not surprising in a novel by Susan Glaspell. That is not the trouble. The trouble lies in a certain lack of ease. These people in "Brook Evans" are strung too high. They have a strained, unnatural appearance. They are preoccupied, to an unhealthy and incredible degree, with their souls and their sex. What they lack may be described perhaps as urbanity.

It is awkward, after such a statement, to take up D. H. Lawrence's new collection of short stories, *The Woman Who Rode Away* (Knopf, $2.50). Where is the urbanity in D. H. Lawrence? His admirers will say, of course, that you do not want urbanity in a Bengal tiger or a Mexican plumed serpent. Mr. Mitchell, in "We Are Incredible" says to Dora, "My God! You aren't a girl. You're a leopard, and if I were a man, I'd make a cage". To which chivalrous remark she obligingly retorts, "I would like that". (Aren't we incredible enough?)

And surely, as one reads "The Woman Who Rode Away", one recalls that conversation and wonders why it isn't in D. H. Lawrence's book. There is a hard and bitter quality in Lawrence these days. He not only writes of neurotics. He writes in a very neurotic way himself. He fears the worst in all relations of life. A novelist who has revealed such power (read once more that marvellous story "The Captain's Doll") deserves our respect. But Lawrence has more than one black mark against him for digging his psychology out of books instead of out of people. He has been quoted as saying that living in America makes him feel like a drawn chicken. Which is a brilliant and accurate description of this reviewer's sensations while reading stories like "Two Blue Birds" and "On The Border". One might forgive Lawrence if he showed any signs of enjoying himself while making the reader miserable. On the contrary he is obviously himself suffering tortures. He writes very much as the epileptic pawnbroker did business with little David Copperfield on the way to Dover. "Oh! My lungs and liver! How much do you want? Oh! My kidneys, I am dying! What will you take?" The reader is so frightened he accepts almost anything Lawrence offers him in order to escape into the open air. It is no doubt great art, but it seems a little insane at times. It must not be supposed that the reviewer is being dogmatic. This is how the world appears to D. H. Lawrence. For him it is true. As Lady Oxford makes one of her characters say, "we have been given incommunicable lives".

There is a rumor abroad that the obsession of novelists with sex is on the wane. The pendulum, say the pundits, is about to start on its swing back to Victorian notions of what constitutes an interesting novel. Some even contend, pointing to "The Bridge of San Luis Rey", that it is already moving that way. But one swallow does not make a summer, and one short book, somewhat thin in texture to non-vegetarians, cannot be accepted as a revolution in the public taste. Even granting the movement as impending, we shall have many books yet dealing belatedly with sex in an alarmingly frank fashion. Little boys, to paraphrase one of Heywood Broun's most annihilating dramatic verdicts, will still be found writing question-

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able things on walls with their pieces of chalk that they have stolen from teacher. There is a faint suggestion of this in Rolf Bennett's *Cranmer Paul* (Harcourt, Brace, $2.00). The craving of American publishers to have a sea-novel on their lists is a praiseworthy emotion, but it is not invariably successful.

"Cranmer Paul" is the name of the chief mate of a British tramp steamer. It is a tramp steamer owned by a company with passenger ships as well. Paul is discovered in Chapter One waking up in a room ashore after a heavy night in Cardiff, that paradise of sailors signing off. He cannot even remember the girl. When he finds her young and pretty he is beguiled into a sort of spurious fondness for her.

It might be as well to say here that Cranmer Paul is quite the most despicable human being this reviewer has found in a few years novel-reading. Paul is an affront to a fairly decent profession. He abandons the pretty and affectionate creature in London when (most mysteriously) he is promoted to be chief mate of a fine yacht-like cruise-ship, painted white and with a yellow funnel. The thesis of our author is that this big-hearted fellow is so revolted by the lasciviousness and concupiscence of the fashionable passengers with whom he is thrown in contact that he longs for the society of Lily Crane. One lady commits suicide and leaves a note bequeathing all her property to the seductive chief-officer. The reviewer felt a pang on reading this. He recognized, after many years at sea, that venerable story. It warned him of what was bound to come. Sure enough, the captain falls sick and Cranmer Paul brings the ship safely home. He is offered another command. His heart, however, is in the right place, and he hunts up Lily. She is the girl for him. He finds her in a pub, happily married to the proprietor, and at least one reader breathed a fervent "Thank God!" The little Bute Street *hetaira* is the only decent character in the book.

In spite of its nautical detail, one wonders whether the author of "Cranmer Paul" knows much about ships. There are blunders, technical solecisms invisible to the lay eye, which raise doubts in a sea-faring mind. Mr. Bennett cannot be congratulated on this attempt to write an intelligible sea-novel. His characters, and even more so his dialogue, remain unconvincing. Granted that the average sea-story is tripe, merely taking us into a shabby harlot's bed-room does not turn it into literature. Eighteen years ago Maurice Drake wrote a sea-novel, "Wrack", in which the virtuous hero, discovering that the woman he loved was very much like Lily Crane, utters a hoarse groan of grief and puts her out of his life forever. Times and manners change. Seamen are amazingly difficult creatures when they get into a novelist's hands, it seems. In "Bound East For Cardiff" Eugene O'Neill caught the authentic forecastle atmosphere. But most writers betray their nervousness or their incompetence when they attempt mates and shipmasters. Mr. Rolf Bennett has no nervousness whatever, but he has failed to engage our sympathy on behalf of his characters. And he certainly does not report conversation with any convincingness. Some of his locutions are frankly fustian and have no basis in reality.

"Nothing," says Lady Oxford in "Octavia", "separates one human being from another more than their inner attitude towards life. Some have a very faint hold on it, others a tenacious grip; some a healthy appetite, others a morbid curiosity, while the vast majority are content to stay put." This declaration may be amended to describe novelists instead of human beings. Mr. Rolf Bennett has a very faint hold upon the life of his characters.

Urbanity, it will be remembered, was mentioned as a desirable quality even though an author craves to show us men and women in the rough, or men and women wandering in the by-ways of experimentalism. An artist who depicts a sheep lost on the mountains ought to know how to draw. He must not, in the ecstasy of his creative impulse, begin to bleat. The more wayward his characters the more necessary it becomes for a novelist to keep a hold on himself and them. The most difficult form of writing in the world is the fairy-tale and the allegory.

Mr. Weston's Good Wine, by T. F. Powys

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(Viking, $3.50), is like none of the other books in the present list. It stands at the head of them, probably, in literary quality and permanence, though this is a dangerous sort of prophecy. Where Lawrence is restless and bitter, T. F. Powys is quiet and faintly malicious. He can be just the least little bit bawdy in a very charming manner. This reviewer takes pleasure in commending "Mr. Weston's Good Wine" to connoisseurs of fine vintages. Here is

" . . . . a beaker full of the warm south,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim
And purple-stained mouth . . "

A word must be said in praise of the book's bodily presence and perhaps two words for George Charlton's drawings. A strange tale needs strange pictures. These are strange and true and beautiful. Mr. Powys has produced a book that, oddly enough, seems to link G. K. Chesterton and David Garnett. It recalls "The Napoleon of Notting Hill" and "Lady Into Fox". It is one of those surprising creations for which English literature is famous. The present reviewer has a malicious desire to recommend it to the gifted author of "We Are Incredible". Progress should not outgrow civilization, says Lady Oxford.

The Countess of Oxford and Asquith, whose name and title appears on the jacket and cover of her novel *Octavia* (Stokes, $2.50) with damnable reiteration, will pardon the reviewer who keeps her waiting while he deals with less important books. He remembers a story read at school in a fine book called "Seven Years At Eton", in which a new boy is asked, after the immemorial custom, what his name may be. The young squirt replies, "Oh I'm the Marquis of So-and So". The other boys administer two resounding kicks on his shins. "One for you and one for the Marquis," they inform him.

Gazing at the purple-and-gold jacket of "Octavia" with its offensive repetition of the author's name, one is inclined to kick. Strange to say, behind all the ballyhooing and tuft-hunting is an excellent novel of manners. Her ladyship's in the purple-and-gold room, gentlemen. And she's looking uncommonly well.

It is all real, this novel of fashionable life in England. There is nothing of Hollywood's sham in it. Octavia, her father and mother, the men who are in love with her and the men who are married to other women, are vividly portrayed in a manner that is taken, with rare sagacity, from Jane Austen. Margot Asquith even quotes from Jane. She quotes from any author who has said a good thing pertinent to her story. She can afford to. She says good things herself. She knows with utter completeness the life she is describing and she also knows a great deal more. She quotes the Frenchman's advice, to listen only to what is not said. In "Octavia" we are on the watch for what is not said, but is none the less understood.

Modern readers, readers who will enjoy "We Are Incredible" for example, will probably feel a grievance when they discover Margot Asquith beginning at the beginning, telling us who and what are her characters. They will goggle and gulp when she describes a tired girl, falling asleep in a man's house and being carried upstairs to bed, left to enjoy a night's rest by her host instead of going Elinor Glyn. They will curl a lip in disdain when the pangs of child-birth are narrated in one brief but masterly paragraph. The novel, in short, is not only urbane, it is civilized. It is about people no better and no worse than ourselves, with the usual equipment of animal spirits, whose lives are not entirely sodden with sex. Their lives, on the contrary, are full of interesting activities—politics, hunting, books, art and music. They even have conversation. Compare the conversation in "We Are Incredible" and in "Octavia". Compare, if you will, the two methods of telling a story: Jane Austen's and Margery Latimer's. This reviewer is content to abide by the result. If novels are really about to recede from neuroticism as a central theme, they can do worse than go back to Jane Austen. Margot Asquith may find herself compared here and there with Disraeli as a novelist, and "Octavia" might have resembled very easily "Coningsby", in a superficial way. There is no reason why she should not give us a

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fascinating novel of political life in England. She makes one of her characters say, what is true of the English, "We are an intensely political nation". She sticks, however, to her story. Her political conversation is brilliant and intensely interesting. The reader is directed particularly to that passage where Greville explains the British Constitution and the position of the King. Compare it with "Revelry" if you want a salutary shock.

But the secular interest dominating "Octavia" is hunting. Margot Asquith knows horses, dogs and men. What a shrewd appraisal is that describing hired horses! "Hirelings," writes one of the characters to Octavia, "are rum devils. They jump without being bold, they are stale without being tired, and they survive us all." Margot Asquith can make this reviewer, who cares very little for sport, thrill with the pleasure of her descriptions of runs. Her brevity is illuminated with her wit: "The Bragg hounds ran into Gatwick Wood, where, after changing foxes several times, they gave up the hunt. The second horsemen scattered to find their masters, and the diminished field were exaggerating their experiences and eating their lunch".

"Octavia" is an excellent portrait of a young woman neither neurotic nor silly. Is it too much to suggest that an intelligent girl is a legitimate subject for a novel? Octavia has an elderly friend, a professor, to whom she writes, after reporting a discussion of politics, "I never enjoyed anything so much. First-rate conversation excites me as much as hunting and leaves more behind it".

And a first-rate novel about civilized people leaves even more than that.

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THE WORLD OF HAVELOCK ELLIS

By Robert Morss Lovett

IT is a matter of gratification that Havelock Ellis has come into his kingdom. After a long and laborious life with scanty rewards and much depreciation, he has achieved recognition as one of the masters of the modern age—a recognition of which the success of his "Dance of Life" and the two biographies, one by Dr. Isaac Goldberg and the present more complete study—*Havelock Ellis, Philosopher of Love,* by Houston Peterson (Houghton Mifflin, $4.50)—are evidence rather than cause.

The reasons for the depreciation which Ellis so long suffered are, chiefly, the fact that he elected to make the basis of his examination of modern life the study of sex, coupled with the accident which led him to publish, as the first of a series of scientific observations, a book on sexual inversion, and the further accident which involved this book in a criminal case against the bookseller at the time of the excitement caused by the Oscar Wilde trial. All this was enough to cause the late-Victorian public to label him at best charlatan, and at worst perverter of morality. In addition to this, Ellis had been a leader in the movement to bring the scientific attitude into literary criticism in "The New Spirit". He had been a coadjutor of Arthur Symons in the last stronghold of the decadents, *The Savoy,* and had spoken without reprobation of Zola, Nietzsche, Casanova and "Jude the Obscure". He had initiated the Mermaid Series of selected plays from the Elizabethan dramatists, of which the title-page bore the inciting word "Unexpurgated". Altogether, Havelock Ellis was in the forefront of offenders against the sacred cause of reticence. Only gradually the self-denial of the man, who continued to publish in the most discreet and guarded form volumes of investigations which through popular exploitation would have made him a millionaire, won him respect; the successive volumes of "Impressions and Comments", with their revelation of a personality so sensitive in feeling and so rich in mind, and of a philosophy which preserved the intrinsic values of living in a world preoccupied by knowing and doing, brought him the gratitude and affection which clearly are to him the greatest of rewards.

There is a further, more subtle, reason for the long season of indifference toward Havelock Ellis. As Mr. Peterson more than once remarks, Ellis has been in respect to no cause the extremist, the partisan, the foe of compromise. He always has looked at both sides: "This notion of reconciling opposites became a passion with Ellis, and one of the most outstanding characteristics of his work. He has been, like Remy de Gourmont, almost incapable of taking sides in capital issues, for he has seen that men are usually right in their affirmations; and only wrong in their denials". Ellis has never, like Huxley, exulted in controversy, nor won the devotion of partisans the more fervent because of his enemies. He has more than once turned aside from active support of movements in which he was enlisted when they ceased to satisfy his fastidious intellectual conscience. Thus it was with the Fabians; with the Suffragettes, with the War. Thus it came about that when his book on "Sexual Inversion" became a symbol in the war for intellectual freedom, Ellis withdrew from the battle. "To wrestle in the public arena for freedom of speech," he wrote, "is a noble task which may worthily be undertaken by any man who can devote to it the best energies of his life. It is not, however, a task which I have ever contemplated." To many reformers, Ellis seemed to abandon a position fundamental to all. In a world in which there is only too much reason to argue that programs become realized because of the fanatical capacity of their advocates for making a nuisance of themselves, Ellis has

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seemed of those who are neither for God nor for his enemies. Certainly not for the Victorian God. "I have observed that there are few questions which I ever took the trouble to investigate and study both sides of the question," wrote Ellis when only seventeen, "but what I came to a conclusion totally opposite to the orthodox one which I have always been taught to believe true." And not for the avowed enemies of God. In the postscript to the last volume of his series, "Sex in Relation to Society", he wrote: "The wise man, standing midway between both parties and sympathizing with each, knows that we are ever in a stage of transition. The present is in every age merely the shifting point at which past and future meet, and we can have no quarrel with either. There can be no world without traditions; neither can there be any life without movement".

Perhaps only on a single subject has Ellis ever let himself go in *saeva indignatio,* and flung a challenge with grim, fire-eyed defiance. That was with regard to the World War. In the beginning Ellis was anti-German, and shared to some extent the delusions spread by the propaganda of the Allies. He did his bit with two volumes of "Essays in War Time". But his recoil was terrific. No one has spoken with more superb energy of the fate which it is fitting that the peoples should mete out to their faithless public servants. In the last volume of "Impressions and Comments", he writes: "If we want to know what our would-be spiritual and intellectual leaders are worth, let us search diligently to find out their records during the War. Have they in speech or action encouraged that War? Have they spoken evil of those who fought on the other side? Have they pharisaically asserted their own superior self-righteousness? Have they, like imbeciles, accepted the empty catchwords of their politicians? If not it is well, and we may hold up our heads. But else they are judged—and we who made them leaders are judged—for by their own mouths they are declared foul emanations of the passions of the crowd, Poison Gas made Flesh. It is meet they are branded on the brows with the Mark of the Beast to which they have sold what they call their souls. So all their fellows may know whom they had to thank for the blessings of the Great War. And if they show their gratitude by hardening the muscles of their arms and gathering all the serpents they can find to make a scourge to lash the backs of these leaders until not one of them is left, perhaps, after all, there might not be less joy on earth".

Mr. Peterson has taken to heart the advice which Havelock Ellis himself gave in a Letter to Biographers to devote their chief attention to the formative years of their heroes. "After thirty—what is there further left to tell?" Accordingly, Mr. Peterson gives in much detail the record of Ellis's early intellectual growth, including long excerpts from the commonplace books in which he left a careful account of his reading, with long extracts and comments, from his sixteenth to his twenty-sixth year. The complete table of contents of these volumes, containing over a thousand titles, given in the appendix, shows an extraordinary diversity of interests—literary, scientific, artistic, social—and reveals the scope and method of Ellis's extraordinary erudition. It is a matter of notice that Ellis began his career of appreciation as a thorough Victorian, with special admiration for those misbegotten monsters, Mrs. Browning's "Aurora Leigh", P. H. Bailey's "Festus", and Alexander Smith's "Life-Drama". His rebirth into science came through a book by a Scotch physician, George Drysdale, called "The Elements of Social Science, or Physical, Sexual and Natural Religion".

Ellis's early culture was like that of his generation, mainly literary. It was also a book, James Hinton's "Life in Nature", which he read in the Australian bush, which precipitated in him the experience of conversion which he has described as "the joyful organization of an emotional relationship to the world conceived as a whole". Henceforth, Ellis's culture became richer. Literature no longer sufficed; painting and music appear among his interests; and through the preoccupations of the scientist, the philosophy emerges of which glimpses appear in "Impressions and Comments" and a full statement in "The Dance of Life".

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"To see the world as Beauty is the whole end of living. I cannot say it is the aim of living. Because the greatest ends are never the result of aiming; they are infinite and our aims can only be finite. We can never go beyond the duty of Saul the Son of Kish, who went forth to seek his father's asses and found a kingdom. It is only so that the Kingdom of Beauty is won".

Mr. Peterson's biography is neither an exciting narrative nor a brilliant interpretation. It is, however, workmanlike and sound. In its somewhat pedestrian quality, it is a relief from the jazz-step of the school of biography popular today. Mr. Peterson for the most part wisely lets Ellis speak for himself. Both as a summary of a significant experience, and as an introduction to a precious philosophy, it deserves a place on the crowded shelf of Ellis's books.

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BIRDS AND BEASTS—MEN AND GODS

By Edward D. McDonald

TAKING a cursory view of the matter, one might be inclined to call Norman Douglas a surprising fellow for sending us more or less simultaneously *Birds and Beasts of the Greek Anthology* (Privately Printed, $6.00) and *In the Beginning* (John Day, $2.50)—the one so unlike the other. The first is a sizable and an impressive scholarly work, done, in all probability, largely *con amore:* that is to say, after the fashion in which Mr. Douglas long years ago used to perform such erudite tasks. The second is a product of the imagination, one that fits comfortably enough the now spacious and hospitable category of the novel. In "Birds and Beasts of the Greek Anthology" Mr. Douglas reverts strongly to natural science, the earliest and one of the most persistent preoccupations of his long career as a writer. With "In the Beginning" he pushes on from the much later and more purely creative impulses of "South Wind" (1917) and especially of "They Went" (1920).

However, in spite of the striking dissimilarities of the present books they are very much alike in one important respect: both are highly authentic Douglas performances. They are, one ventures to assert, as characteristic of their author as any pair of books could possibly be. And what is more, "Birds and Beasts" is, if anything, more typical of Mr. Douglas than "In the Beginning". Which is saying a good deal. There need, then, be no surprise that Norman Douglas should, albeit somewhat suddenly, shake these two volumes out of his sleeve, the one filled with scientific speculations upon birds and beasts, the other with satyric reflections upon men and gods. Complementing each other in bringing neatly together the extreme ends of his writing career, these books give proof, very heartening proof, that for all his sixty years Mr. Douglas is still in fine fettle and able to turn a trick in the manner of the old days as well as of the new. But to the books severally.

The "Greek Anthology", the source of Mr. Douglas's most recent zoölogical observations, has been called "an epitome, slightly sketched with a facile hand, of the book of Greek life". Containing upwards of four thousand epigrammatic pieces, this famous collection represents the work of about three hundred poets over considerably more than a thousand years of time. According to J. W. Mackail's classification, the epigrams fall, among others, under the following heads: Love, Religion, Beauty, Fate and Change, The Human Comedy, Life, and Death. In a word, the "Anthology" is of the first importance for any attempt at a record of Greek thought and feeling on the greatest possible variety of subjects.

With this ancient book Norman Douglas has obviously passed many a pleasant and not unprofitable hour. His abiding predilection for the classics is, of course, very marked; it is written all over his work. Consequently, one is prepared for Mr. Douglas's assertion that for long he played with the idea of writing a complete natural history of the "Anthology", which might well have blossomed into a definitive account of the animal economy of antiquity. What a pity that circumstances forced Mr. Douglas to relinquish this larger project; for what he has given us in "Birds and Beasts" is actually very much less than that. In this book Mr. Douglas has delimited the field of his speculations in two important directions. In the first place, the flora of the "Anthology" is not touched upon at all; and in the second place, the treatment of the fauna is consciously restricted to wild animal life. Domestic animals are referred to here only incidentally by way of occasional reference. Nothing more.

"Birds and Beasts" as it now stands—there may be more of it after a while—is

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divided into six major sections, to wit: Mammals, Birds, Reptiles and Batrachians, Sea Beasts, and Creeping Things. Under these headings Mr. Douglas comments upon some one hundred and fifty different living things which are referred to by the writers of the "Anthology" in six hundred places. No doubt all of this sounds profoundly scientific, even dull. Scientific Mr. Douglas's comments may be; dull they certainly are not. For here, as always with him, are combined keenness and breadth of observation, wit and wisdom in conjecture or generalization, quite extraordinary gifts of clear and beautiful expression. As has been said, "Birds and Beasts" is a typical Douglas book. Without these things it could not be so.

Browsing through "Birds and Beasts"—which is the thing to do—one soon enough catches the unique flavor of Norman Douglas's incidental comment. A passage taken from the section on mammals ought to show this, and amuse, in particular, readers of our older English literature—especially the drama. While speaking in general of the references in the "Anthology" to deer, Mr. Douglas takes occasion to throw in this observation: "We might note, since we are on this horny subject, that a couplet of Callicter contains what may be the first allusion in literature to the emblem of complacent husbands, though I cannot guess which animal he has in mind. Moderns prefer the stag; the horns of the goat being already marked down, by Christianity, as a diabolical symbol. Yet the goat was known in this character to antiquity (*aix* = a woman of loose life), and this at first sight is odd, considering the strong sexual passions of the male, which suggest jealousy of rivals on his part. Columella clears up the difficulty when he says that the he-goat, by reason of its very amorousness, exhausts its powers at an early age and becomes a spectator of the wife's faithlessness from impotence rather than indifference. This means nothing more than that it wears its horns, like certain other creatures, not unconsciously, but with open-eyed resignation".

There are many things in this world which do not altogether please Mr. Douglas. One of these is the bee, maker of honey and symbol of prudential virtues. Honey, Mr. Douglas does not care for. That he esteems the ordinary variety of prudential virtues is at least questionable. In any case, thus does he in the present book dispose of the bee: "There are fifty or more references in the 'Anthology' to the bee and its products—no disproportionate number, when one considers that, from time immemorial, men have held in veneration this cantankerous and fussy insect which, by dint of specializing in communistic habits, has lost every shred of individuality. . . . They (the ancients) thought mighty well of the bee's industry and of its orderly habits, and drew many edifying parables therefrom, forgetful of the fact that it loafs nearly half the year and is orderly only because it lacks such independence of character and imagination as even a louse possesses". If these observations are not typical of Mr. Douglas, where is one likely to find such observations?

To the limitations already referred to in the scope of "Birds and Beasts" must be added another of a different and more serious nature. This is the author's failure to draw from his significant findings general conclusions commensurate with the detailed character of his study. True, he makes some attempt in the direction of a suitable summary in his prefatory remarks, but one feels strongly the insufficiency of this preliminary survey. The generalizations, such as are given, are interesting enough but still very inadequate. They merely show what might have been done if Mr. Douglas had, keeping hold of his patience, undertaken a competent analysis of the broader import of his researches. It must be said, therefore, that in its present form "Birds and Beasts" is not a book for the general reader. It will appeal chiefly to persons who are specifically interested in the classics or animal lore—and conceivably also to those more zealous members of the growing Douglas cult who gladly take the hair with the hide whenever the oracle of "South Wind" lets it be known that he has spoken.

Mr. Douglas evidently foresaw the restricted appeal of "Birds and Beasts". In any case, he issued the book privately in Florence, limiting the edition to five hundred

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numbered and signed copies. But after making due allowance for the esoteric character of this book, its high price, and so on, one wonders how a few hundred copies will meet the demand for such a monograph. Certainly no professional classicist or zoölogist will contentedly remain ignorant of this study of the wild fauna of the "Greek Anthology". Nor can any respectable college library, however poor, very well be without it. But enough of birds and beasts and crawling things; let us on to men and gods and demigods and such like unreasoning and unreasonable fry, for this is what Mr. Douglas's latest book makes out of these supposedly higher beings.

To the existing fictional accounts of creation there has now been added another. It is by Norman Douglas out of Homer, and is called, appropriately enough, "In the Beginning". The Douglas version of Genesis is not likely to shatter the high authority of that ancient story of creation which is now generally attributed to Moses and of which Milton has been, by and large, the most successful press-agent. This tale by Mr. Douglas of the "days when Immortals sought pleasure where they found it—not only in their own Celestial Halls but among the sons and daughters of earth; days when mankind thereabouts walked naked without shame, and the thing called Sin had not yet been invented" would have left Milton gasping; one can't be so sure of Moses. It may, in point of fact, leave the modern reader not a little dizzy unless he is prepared for a very heady concoction. Readers of "South Wind" and "They Went" will be so prepared; or, if they are not, then it is certain they have read these books to little purpose. For it was inevitable that Norman Douglas should sooner or later have his say about those times and beyond when even so historic people as the Greeks thought nothing of telling their gods in good plain Greek exactly what was expected of them. If ever a novel was in the wood this one was. Before passing on to his final reward Normal Douglas just had to write something like "In the Beginning".

And now that he has done so, the question everybody will be asking about the book is this: "Is it as good as 'South Wind'?" The answer to this vexatious question is—"Yes and no". Certainly it is more glamorous, more luxuriant—at times even to the point of rankness. Here at least—some would say for the first time—Mr. Douglas has created a character that touches the heart and beats upon the affections. What character in "South Wind" dare stand up beside the youthful Linus save to his own disadvantage? And there is Ayra—and for a moment these two standing together in the mystery of adolescence. An idyll, beautifully wrought. In the mere telling, this episode is sheer joy. But so consistently is the style of "In the Beginning" serenely beautiful that Mr. Douglas must be willing to say of it what he on one occasion said of "Alone" (1921): "Going through the pages of this book I find, for a wonder, little that I should care to have written differently".

So much one may say for "In the Beginning" and yet quit the book with the feeling that as a whole it is inferior to "South Wind" or, for that matter, to "They Went". In its entirety Mr. Douglas's new novel somehow fails to come off. It lives in its part; not in its whole. Perhaps a travesty designed upon so huge a scale as is "In the Beginning" must inevitably fall of its own weight. In any event, fall it certainly does—and in the midst of its scaffolding. The parts remain; and, as has been said, they are often glorious. On making further comparisons one notices another thing: much of the wit and the raillery, the irony and urbanity, of the earlier Douglas novels is here; but intermixed at times is a strange bitterness, in which the old detachment and serenity seem to lose themselves. When this happens Mr. Douglas's vision of the world becomes ugly, even mean. Which in itself is nothing. Such visions are needed. But there are many who have no detachment or serenity to lose. Would it not be wiser to let some of these spend themselves upon the ugly and the mean?

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A Shelf of Recent Books

THE TRAGEDY OF VAN GOGH

By Thomas Craven

VINCENT VAN GOGH. *By Julius Meier-Graefe. Payson & Clarke. $3.00.*

VAN GOGH was a painter of genius. It would be difficult to name an artist whose life exhibits a more complete and impassioned surrender to the torments of the spirit. Other men, Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt and Cézanne, have yielded as intensely to the creative impulse and have produced a far more profound and influential art; but for the parallel of this mad Dutchman, in religious ecstasy and self-sacrifice, we must turn back to the audacious convictions of St. Francis himself. Van Gogh's life is the record of one who shrank at nothing to save his soul. His faith in humanity was simply incredible; alone among modern painters he divined the inseparable union of art and religion, and in his fierce internal conflicts he sought to reconcile his visions with the hard realities of the world and to find in painting a universal language for the regeneration of mankind. We may say that he was only a lunatic striving for the unattainable, but let us not forget that he was, despite his obvious and pitiable limitations, extraordinarily open-minded, generous and consistent; that his ideas, when put into practice, brought forth canvases of remarkable vitality and convincing spiritual truth; and that, after all, he had the courage to face the world without fear and to prove all things in order to discover the road to his salvation.

Van Gogh's life is one of the tragedies of modern art. His fanatic enthusiasms, his ungovernable debauches both of the spirit and of the flesh, and his abnormal sensitivity drove him to violent insanity and in the end to self-destruction. Seven times he tried to save himself—by religion, love and art—and in each instance his excesses, often repulsive and always pathetic, would have destroyed any man of lesser faith. Indeed they would have destroyed Van Gogh but for the unwearying devotion of his brother, a fortunate picture-dealer who not only gave the eccentric painter a monthly allowance and condoned his outrageous conduct but who actually understood the appalling struggles of a powerful though disordered imagination. The son of a lowly clergyman, Van Gogh grew up with the fear of God in his heart and a burning desire to enter the Church; his designs were thwarted and he found himself at the age of sixteen, an assistant in the fashionable Goupil Galleries of London. What a strange figure he must have been, this ugly youth with his flaming red hair, his angular head, deep-set eyes and protruding cheek bones, this inarticulate visionary dressed in a morning coat and top-hat and forced to sell pictures to complacent snobs! He ran off to Belgium and became a lay preacher to the coal-miners; he wandered through the Low Countries, absorbed in art and consorting with prostitutes—the only women, it seems, who would tolerate, even for a moment, his fantastic notions of humanitarian love; he studied painting in Paris; he drank heavily and worked without ceasing; his brother sent him to the south of France, where he painted furiously for a few years, attempted to form a brotherhood of artists, quarrelled with Gauguin, and went completely mad. He was taken to a private asylum near Paris, and one day, upset by his doctor's views on art, he fired a bullet into the pit of his stomach.

This story, both wretched and heroic, Dr. Meier-Graefe has told in a book that is in itself a work of art, a book that reveals much more clearly and intimately the operations of the creative mind than any of the Doctor's purely critical studies. More than biography, it is a searching inquiry into the soul of an artist made by a man who is not only a master of every mood and detail of

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Van Gogh's life but who presents these moods and details in their relation to the pictorial conceptions of the artist. By incorporating the painter's letters with the general narrative and by interpreting external actions in the light of inner experiences, Meier-Graefe has contrived to give the account the form of a dramatic monologue. We feel that Van Gogh himself is laying before us the adventure of his tortured soul. There is no striving for effects, no parading of sensational material: the man comes to life and with curious medieval faith confesses his whole mind. Even the ghastly episode of the ear, an episode which apart from its context was only the hideous act of a madman and which has hitherto been treated as such, is related to distinguish Van Gogh, an artist with religious convictions, from Gauguin, the talented skeptic. It seems that the poor Dutchman was goaded into a fit of insanity by Gauguin's cold-blooded insolence and persistent ridicule, and that in his irresponsible despair he cut off one of his own ears and carried it to a brothel as a Christmas gift to one of the girls.

Van Gogh studied Delacroix, Millet, Monticelli and the Japanese, but in the main, he was a self-trained artist. To him more than to anyone else we owe the cult of Expressionism in painting, but the word has been employed by so many freaks and incompetents that it is no longer worthy of its founder. So far as it is possible, he invented his own expressive symbols; he was thrown into a frenzy by his immediate contacts with the world, and sought, by means of violent silhouettes, writhing forms and distortions, to convey to others the dramatic force of his first impressions. For a time his influence was enormous, and he was regarded as the prophet of a new era; but today the trend of art is toward a more reflective order of things, toward carefully disciplined powers and the organization of assimilated experiences, and Van Gogh's eminence has rapidly declined. But his personality and the tragedy of his life as nobly told by Meier-Graefe will not be forgotten by those who are seriously interested in art and in the struggles of the artist in modern society.

BUCCANEERS

By Axton Clark

INTERPRETERS OF NATURE. *By Sir George Newman. Oxford University Press. $4.50.*

STAGE DECORATION. *By Sheldon Cheney. John Day. $10.00.*

AMERICA: NATION OR CONFUSION. *By Edward R. Lewis. Harper. $3.50.*

THE AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE OF TODAY. *By G. H. Edgell. Scribner's. $6.00.*

BUCCANEERS OF THE PACIFIC. *By George Wycherly. Bobbs-Merrill. $5.00.*

SUPERFICIALLY, it seems a far cry from an abstraction, such as we consider the struggle of change and permanence to be, to the concrete and trivial events of every day life. The essential limits of things, and the encroachments upon them, suggest the unrolling drama of time and change. Permanence and alteration, codified principle and the assertion of individuality, convention and innovation, enforcement of rule and personal freedom, all represent phases of the profoundest structural qualities present in the cosmos, and are all closely akin. It does not do to think of these things as abstract, much as they may sound so. They are constitutive of reality; and around their fluctuations center the interests, the delights, and the outrages of life.

It is curious to take a number of books which are totally different in character, and to see to what extent the encroachment phase of the eternal struggle between permanence and change plays into them. Objective as all situations are which involve such encroachments, it is most interesting to examine them, in the light of the attitudes that human beings take towards them, as well as the permanences and encroachments in those very attitudes.

On the surface, the usual appeal, in questions of infraction, is to human sympathy with the rebel, the under dog. Even where the latter is supplanted by a swashbuckling bully, a romantic interest is aroused. This is the case, for example, with the buccaneer. He is the embodiment of arbitrary change, of personality asserting itself against any

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established order. Stripped of its trappings, the "Buccaneer" situation occurs in all sorts of unexpected places.

Sir George Newman has written a scholarly volume on "Interpreters of Nature", who, from his standpoint, are the pioneering naturalists and doctors. It is no far-fetched analogy, if one can think of oneself as a partisan of disease or of the microbe, to consider Boerhaave or Pasteur as Buccaneers of the worst sort, tearing away goods, rights, and territories, proper to other entities by fact of possession. To object that this is futile paradox is to overlook the relativism inherent in all conceptions of rights. But insofar as no intelligent codified relation is possible between diseases and man, the history of the encroachment of doctors against disease takes on, to us, not the aspect of piracy, but one very different indeed. There is a vital interest for human beings in a book that, learnedly and with extraordinary clarity, deals with the vicissitudes of medicine in the hands of the great Paduan doctors, of Sydenham, John Hunter, William Osler, and others, with an interesting digression on John Keats.

In matters of national or artistic history, the vicissitudes of stability and encroachment are strikingly internal and stimulating. At bottom, immigration of every kind is arrant land-grabbing. Our present restrictive immigration laws are possibly salutary; but their enaction, by a nation inheriting land throughout which their forefathers subjugated the Red Indian, is one of the ironic and amazing inconsequences of history. In his "America: Nation or Confusion", E. R. Lewis studies our whole present racial situation in detail and most interestingly. He believes that, for various racial and psychological reasons, the melting-pot idea has collapsed. He discusses the "Fallacy of Selective Immigration", "The Making of Nations", "The Internal Results of Heterogeneity". He argues that the laws of 1924 make for preservation of our essential unity and our essential national tradition. But one finds oneself wishing that he had made his conception of American tradition more clear, instead of falling back on something of an emotionalized abstraction, and that he had shown more profound evidence on the correlation between race and the unity of cultural tradition. It is easy to fall into dogmatism on questions of race that still remain scientifically very obscure and undecided. But the facts and instances that Mr. Lewis presents are worth consideration.

In G. H. Edgell's "The American Architecture of Today", and in Sheldon Cheney's "Stage Decoration", one again finds histories dealing closely with the processes of stabilization and encroachment, conservation and development. From a slightly academic, yet liberal point of view, Mr. Edgell surveys the several forms of architecture as they have appeared and been modified for the uses of this country. He gives enthusiastic place to the architectural buccaneering gendered by sky-scrapers and the characteristically national demands of commerce. If he tends to grow a shade too schematic in his texts, he is at the same time coherent and comprehensive. His illustrations cover the gamut from our most conservative and earliest types of buildings to the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and the interesting previsions of Hugh Ferriss. The book makes one realize what an original development architecture is having in this country, and what rich and beautiful specimens we already possess.

Sheldon Cheney, too, has relied valuably on a bulk of illustrations equal to the pages of his text. Mr. Cheney has long been interested in the theater; and this book is the result of his preoccupation. He traces the development of stage decoration from the earliest Greek practice through to the influence of Gordon Craig and Adolphe Appia, to Expressionism and Constructivism. If he, too, tends towards the schematic, this emphasizes the clarity of his account of the fundamental development of the stage. The selection of plates is divided into two parts: "A Pictorial Record of Stage Forms of Decoration, From the Beginnings to 1900", and "One Hundred Examples of Modern Stage Decoration". The plates are well selected. With its parallel text and illustrations, it is a valuable hand-book for the layman who wishes to understand something of the history of the stage, as well as of what the

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moderns are trying to do with stage decoration.

Now, after hovering in the realm of near metaphor, we finally come to the "Buccaneers of the Pacific" themselves. Their story is set down by George Wycherly. His style is unfortunately a little pedestrian; yet the matter of the narrative again carries the book along. The breathless daring and impudence of these Englishmen (to whom, by the way, the author limits his story) will hold any one who is not stone-cold to swashbuckling. Sir Francis Drake, Cavendish, Sharp, Dampier, cruise through the Pacific waters calmly confusing rights and infractions, secretly sustaining and openly attacking governments, valiantly buccaneering. There are reproductions of contemporary illustrations and charts. It is curious to see California conceived as an island, or to look at the peculiar construction of sea lions in which one of the artists revelled.

And so the history of human activity moves on, with its arrogant encroachments political and economic, with its noble revindications, its defenders of constitution and liberty, with its achievement of new beauties robbing territory from the old, with its hopeful attempts to secure a classical health and sanity by what may seem the romantic buccaneerings of nature and man in the lands of prejudice, disease, and destruction.

IMAGE OR LIKENESS

By Don. Seitz

NAKED TRUTH. *By Clare Sheridan. Harper. $5.00.*

HERE is an instance where a lurid cover-jacket, for which perhaps the publishers are responsible, does injustice to a remarkable and compelling volume. It implies that the author has not paused at fig-leaves and invites the attention of the prurient. To the contrary, Mrs. Sheridan has produced an autobiography, powerfully written by a firm hand, with the finest sort of literary skill.

It is an extraordinary life story, so convincingly told that it is worthy to rank with the self-revelations of greater personages. Mrs. Sheridan enjoys an unusual ancestry, with advantages in association and environment that come to life in her book.

In the sunny days of the Second French Empire, three very talented and agreeable American sisters became bright figures in Paris, and lightened London's gloom. They were Jennie, Leonie and Clara Jerome, daughters of Lawrence Jerome of New York, head of the Jockey club and leader in the lively set that made New York famous in the decade following the Civil War. All three married abroad. The first captured the brilliant Lord Randolph Churchill, scion of the great Duke of Marlborough, who made his own name as an English statesman. The second married a fine gentleman, Sir John Leslie, and the third married the eminent political economist and bi-metallist, Moreton Frewen. Clare Sheridan is a daughter of this last. Winston Spencer Churchill and Shane Leslie are her cousins. The best doors in Britain were hers to walk through in her girlhood. She entered them all.

Like most men whose minds bubble with great thoughts for the public welfare, Moreton Frewen was careless about that of his family and himself. He was here and there about the world on his economic missions, glancing from America to Australia, promoting Prince Rupert on the far Pacific West of Canada, which he saw growing from a dock to a metropolis, beside hoping more than William Jennings Bryan to marry gold and silver successfully in the money marts of the world.

These efforts left him poor and his family on the ragged edge. He came so close to bankruptcy as to chill his energies, but escaped the shame.

These discomforting attributes spoiled him as a father save as he transmitted talent. He scolded Clare when a child for scratching his varnished shoes in an affectionate effort to climb into his lap. She did not try it again. Mother was loving, but fashionable and helpless; Aunt Jennie sustaining, Aunt Leonie kind, Cousin Shane an adoration and Winston an advice-giver.

Escaping school in season, the family wished Clare to retrieve its fortunes by a wealthy marriage. Prospects were plentiful

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but she snubbed them all. She would have preferred Cousin Shane, but he cast off his fortune as eldest son and heir in a momentary passion to become a priest, though of a Protestant line. Ascetic schooling nearly killed him and he gave up his desire. A German bullet killed his brother Norman and brought back the discarded inheritance. But by this time Clare was gone—married after after much agonizing and family objection to Wilfred Sheridan, member of a stock-broking firm, with long hours and little time for domesticity.

Wilfred Sheridan, though exempt by law, felt the call to duty in France, and there died. The World War wrecked his firm. The Frewens could do nothing, the Sheridan grandfather would do nothing for the widow and her two children. So she did for herself. She took to art, painting and sculpture. Pot-boilers for small shops kept the wolf away. The chisel brought her friends, commissions and adventures. The greatest of these was to Russia, whither she went boldly under the guidance of Kamenoff to model the faces of Lenin, Trotsky and some of their fellows. Her adventures were gripping. She was well received by men, coldly by women. Perhaps she ought not to call Madam Kamenoff a "bitchovitch" but the provocation was ample. It is the one naked thing in the book.

This Russian experience was classic. Fancy a studio in the Kremlin, where she was greeted with wondering eyes by John Reed, the American who was to be buried in its wall! Here Lenin sat nervously while she moulded the wet clay with a red soldier guarding the door, his bayonet fixed as check to intruders. Trotsky tempted her to follow him afar to the Caucasus. Second thought made her decline. Third thought started her for the train. It had departed. No wonder London sat up to await her homecoming and the great *Times* paid one hundred pounds per column for her cleverly kept diary.

She has preserved Lenin and Trotsky so they can be remembered, this woman of English birth and American mind, on whom kings smiled as a girl. The wretched Milan of Servia brought her such a dolly once! The Princesses of Connaught were her intimates. One of them became Sweden's Queen. Rodin approved of her genius. Great artists and authors welcomed her, even though Kipling grew cold over an interview. For her the ex-Empress Eugénie unveiled the portrait of her precious Prince Imperial in its diamond frame. To her the Queen of Sweden's doctor loaned his castle on the cliff at Capri. If her father gave her no money, she has lacked nothing else and has been one of the earth's fortunate children.

Her path has not been rose-strewn nor her success great. But it has been a wonderful journey with still some distance to go. Her book is an epic of the unusual. It concludes amid the date trees of a North African oasis with an assumption that her stirring soul has found repose in The Garden of Allah!

ART OF THE PRIMITIVES

By Alexander Goldenweiser

PRIMITIVE ART. *By Franz Boas. With 308 Text Illustrations and 15 plates. Harvard University Press. $7.50.*

OF ALL things primitive, art has always attracted the attention not alone of the scientist but of the layman as well. And for good reasons. For in their art the pre-literate peoples of early days have left samples of what folk-civilization at its best could achieve. Here we have, at times, not mere excellence but perfection. And in addition to high quality, there is a variety of form, an exuberance beyond parallel in later historic cultures.

In view of these facts, the absence of an up-to-date popular exposition of the artistic activities of primitive folk has long been felt as an anomaly. Such works as Haddon's or Grosse's or Hirn's were one-sided, while the numerous excellent studies of particular groups were buried in monographs inaccessible to the layman and somewhat forbidding in form.

"Primitive Art" thus fills a long felt want. In detail of treatment, in comprehensiveness, in methodological rigor, finally, the book stands unique. It naturally falls into three

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parts. The first part, after some preliminary historical and theoretical considerations (all too brief, alas!) deals with the formal elements in art, representative art, symbolism and style. The second part is wholly devoted to an elaborate discussion of the art of the Northwest coast of North America, to the study of which the author has given so much talent and attention for over thirty years. Part Three deals with primitive literature, music and dance.

The main thesis of the opening part is that art means form—and beautiful form—and skill. The form is handed down by tradition and is thus the folk's contribution to art; the skill is the operative tool of the craftsman. Without relatively fixed form—and in primitive society it is fixed indeed!—there is no art, nor can there be art in the absence of skill, craftsmanship, at times amounting to virtuosity. Hence art flourishes wherever expertness in the handling of particular materials or techniques is to be found.

Unfortunately, the author here restricts himself wholly to primitive data—his avowed subject-matter, to be sure—and for this reason many a knotty problem fails to appear. The problem of beauty, for example. Professor Boas is probably right in identifying "form" with "beautiful form" when dealing with art, but in the face of present doubts and discussions this can no longer be taken for granted: the thesis must be defended.

Again, the inclusion, however cursory, of the modern scene would have emphasized the folk-character of all primitive art with its all but immovable fixity of traditional form. Here the individual artist enters the art arena almost wholly as a tool, an operative principle. His "ego", his personal idiosyncrasies, enter very slightly, if at all. The individuality and subjectivity of modern art has led to a radical transvaluation here: the artist, first of all, craves self-expression, and is often all too indulgent as to the rest. But the point remains that a very different set of values is involved here, which cannot be neglected with impunity, even in a consideration of primitive art.

In handling representative art, the author is eminently and easily successful in disposing of the older and somewhat moribund theory of the origin of conventional or geometrical art from realistic or representative art, which is assumed as primary. The interplay of psychic impulses is nicely set forth here: the impulse to see geometrical figures in natural forms, and the other, to read naturalistic meanings into rectilinear or curvilinear figures. Throughout, the influence of technique—and, less markedly, of material—is duly emphasized.

This part also would have gained in interest and theoretical bearing if it were written with one eye on the wider field of realistic art outside the primitive range. For certain elements enter into realistic art—certain elements of skill and specific ability—which fall outside the prerequisites of other arts. A due valuation of this factor would, I believe, lead to its inclusion in *any* discussion of realistic art.

In writing of the art of Northwest America Professor Boas is in his own favorite haunts. Needless to say, the treatment is most elaborate—full of suggestions for the budding anthropologist first of all, but also for the general student of art. Everything seems combined here: technical skill, exuberance of forms, uniqueness of traditional style, a richness of symbolic interpretations (for we are in the land of the totem pole!) almost verging on the pathological. The author does full justice to this material. The book would be of great value if it contained nothing but this section on the art of the Kwa-Kintl and Haida and Tlingit.

The section on literature, music and the dance suffers from brevity. On the literary side it can now be supplemented by Paul Radin's very illuminating pages in his "Primitive Man as a Philosopher". Nevertheless, this part also will prove an eye-opener to many a reader. For we are shown, with careful selection of material and much originality in analysis, that the elements of form, rhythm, style, symbolism—elements so important in the plastic arts—appear also in the arts of song, dance and story.

What Professor Boas has to say about the octave in this connection may well serve as a symbol of our orientation in a much wider field. As in the domain of race there is

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psychic unity but local differentation with contrasts leading to conflicts and prejudices, so in the domain of musical form there is the common foundation of the octave, but within these limits room enough for diverse musical scales leading to violent contrasts. Peoples dislike each other's music as they dislike each other's faces, manners and customs. The problem of the ambitious student of music and of the aspiring citizen of the world, is the same: first—*distinguo*, and second—*nihil humanum mihi alienum*.

LIBERTY, EQUALITY——

By Florence H. Winterburn

LOUIS XIV, KING OF FRANCE AND OF NAVARRE. *By C. S. Forester. Dodd, Mead. $4.00.*

LA FAYETTE. *By Henry Dwight Sedgwick. Bobbs-Merrill. $5.00.*

LAFAYETTE. *By Joseph Delteil. Minton Balch. $3.50.*

NAPOLEON THE MAN. *By R. McNair Wilson. Century. $5.00.*

WITH whatever good there was in his nature distorted and poisoned by the education which Anne of Austria and her lover, Mazarin, permitted, Louis XIV came to the throne of France imbued with but one idea: that he was by birth entitled to be Czar of the world. How he hedged himself about with a network of etiquette, how his one variation of this game was the making of senseless wars, is exceedingly well told in C. S. Forester's book. The plan of the volume is flexible, admitting bits of amusing personal narrative between forceful recounting of international bickerings and diplomatic plots. Careless of money wrung from the populace with whom he never came into contact, Louis XIV poured out his vast revenues on the satellites he maintained at Versailles and on the wars that ultimately cost him half his territory. But while he was bleeding his despised subjects, he unconsciously laid the foundation for the Democracy that he hated and feared. He destroyed the feudality of the lords when he compelled them to leave their estates to live at court. His egotism antagonized the great of his own generation, but, what is more important, it antagonized generations still to come through the binding restrictions laid upon normal life among the people. He never saw beyond the narrow walls of his court. When he sallied forth to battle he fought without vision, without science, with only animal courage pitted against such soldiers as Marlborough and Prince Eugène. Too late he learned that he had sunk a powerful country into a state which would make his successor afraid. Louis XIV nourished the Liberty seed which was to be harvested as the bloodiest crop France had ever put out her hands to gather.

In 1757 Fate played a strange trick, to the great good luck of America, in making a veritable citizen of the United States come to birth in France. Lafayette—for that is the way Joseph Delteil has preferred to write his name—the "little boy from Auvergne", was imbued with a profound sense of the equality of men. Child of joy and light, he danced through all the strait-laced ideas that imprisoned a nobly-born son of France in those days; yet to obey law was the guiding principle of his life, as Henry Sedgwick notices astutely in his more ably written biography of the same hero. Romantic readers may prefer Delteil's story to Sedgwick's stately, thoughtful work. Taken together the books form a complete description of the one figure in this period of history who commands both admiration and love. La Fayette inspired affection by his exalted enthusiasm for "the good, the true, the beautiful" as personified in humanity. Sent to the dissolute court of Louis XIV where love was lust and honor the wearing of gold lace, La Fayette forgot none of his innate preferences for action, for honest strife and the eternal war of the spirit against flesh. Delteil asserts that he loved his devoted wife but tamely, "having the small nose that denotes lack of passion"! Sedgwick gives us exact outlines of how and why the gay young Frenchman was prepared, by his study of the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau and Diderot, for the revolutionary principles then being declared in the United States. To get to America, to

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lend his fortune, his energy, his influence to the cause Washington was fighting for became his one dream. Upon Washington he moulded himself; the wonderful man's example, affection, friendship, henceforth guided his career. The animosity of monarchs, the sneers of their ministers, the spite of Jacobins mattered nothing in comparison. A noble himself, La Fayette detested the whole tribe, fancying, when anything went wrong, that some noble was at the bottom of it. Yet he protected Louis and Marie Antoinette as well as he could, since they had law on their side. La Fayette fought for the extension of privileges for the people, but never encouraged the disruption of the laws. The Revolution appalled him, but he stood by the democracy of his adored America. It is said that if he had been ambitious he might have risen to be Emperor of the French. That is as may be. He preferred his home, and died lonely, perhaps, but never to be ignored or forgotten while the hymn of Human Brotherhood is sung on earth.

Carelessly tossing him amidst other great conquerors, historians have frequently given a false impression of Napoleon Bonaparte. They often forget that before all else, Napoleon was a man. He was a loyal kinsman; he had a deep feeling of brotherhood to Frenchmen, the sense of relationship with his clan. And Napoleon's clan broadened out gradually to embrace all France and its dependencies. With great simplicity McNair Wilson has put down a narrative that must have cost him years of mental toil. If Mr. Wilson had not loved Napoleon he could not have entered into such rapport with him, could never have turned out such an unvarnished and touching account of his inner life. As it is, he has given us a complete, excellent work. The self-denying life led by the young Napoleon, his uncomplaining sacrifices for his younger brother and sisters, his gradual change from the timid boy to a determined soldier, leading armies, mastering and apportioning kingdoms is all told. Wilson has fought and won, in spirit, Napoleon's great battles in the Alps: "There followed days of worship; but Napoleon fled from his worshipers. He was charming always, but as elusive as charming. While others drank whole fountains of pleasure in his honor, he returned to the fare of his boyhood, "work and study and soldier's bread".

CLARIFYING CRITICISM

By Edna Kenton

THE BRONTË SISTERS. *By Ernest Dimnet. Harcourt, Brace. $2.50.*

IT is always interesting to read a French critic on an English writer. He clears the air. For his material is, in the first place, assimilated as the English critic's is usually not, and gives a clear portrait, instead of features befogged in a welter of unarranged or badly arranged "notes". In the second place, the background is firm and harmonious, thanks to three ingrained French traditions for good criticism; the Saint-Beuvian "liberty of appreciation", the Balzacian identification of what people are with what they do, and the Tainesque unity—positively Greek—of racial environment, racial psychology, and racial literature.

Dimnet's little book on "The Brontë Sisters", first published in 1910, but only recently available in an English translation, is a first rate condensation of the mass of relevant and irrelevant material which has collected about those daughters of Haworth, from which has sprung an expensive little library of sane and insane "Studies" and "Lives". Unlike most critics, he does not permit their pathetic story to blur critical judgment. His first chapter gives us the famous "environment" of the sisters, and the "race", through which their "psychology" and their "literature" must spring. He does not hesitate to call the psychology of their literature dream stuff merely. He exercises liberty of appreciation in denying that Patrick Brontë was an evil, tyrannical, half-mad megalomaniac: "Mr. Brontë was a silent, dreamy hypochondriac, peacefully egoistic, seldom going out of the house, and wearing out his life in his study". Against this type of father he reconstructs the childhood of the motherless four; Charlotte, eleven, Branwell, ten, Emily, nine, and Anne, five. In-

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stead of this being a period of father-fear, "Four peaceful years followed. The children were well, and began to live their solitary life with the intensity which always characterized it". To Patrick Brontë, poet, preacher, reader, dreamer, he gives credit for the imaginative richness of his children's early life; through him they knew books, by him they were let alone, and, for their own amusement, began to write books. Dimnet quotes from one of Charlotte's early manuscripts, written at the age of thirteen, and adds: "Her language is already formed; it is the admixture of firmness, ease and brilliancy which were to characterize all she would write in the future".

He is sympathetic to Branwell—after all, there are five, not three, Brontës; one without the others does not exist, do what we will—and he handles the Robinson scandal with a critical coolness lacking in most Brontëan literature. He praises Mrs. Gaskell's "rare courage" in telling the story in the first edition of her "Life of Charlotte Brontë"; courage called by her contemporaries "rare indiscretion", for which she suffered. It was all true, he concludes, and it is important merely as source material for the "evil" in his innocent sisters' fictions.

Interesting, and new in Brontëan criticism, is his comparison of Charlotte's literary style and qualities with George Sand's, a comparison to which he returns several times. He finds in them both the same absence of plan, the same mixture of convincing truth with impossibilities in which the author alone believes, the same latent lyricism exploding at times into the "grand style", the same vehemence, the same false taste for melodrama, the same inherent power and passion that overrode the grossest absurdities and that carried the reader, acquiescent, through incredible situations. He finds in her "an everlasting dualism", bubbling, powerful in hidden depths, where the real Charlotte was at work, but outwardly cold, provincial, conventional, cruelly moral. Her morality as a working artist, by the way, he calls into question time and again, not only in the outstanding example—her blackening of Madame Heger's character through Madame Beck in "Villette".

Dimnet has made an admirable attempt to sink the story of the Yorkshire sisters below the surface of their stories. He is not infatuated, not beguiled, seldom sentimental. But he has not succeeded, and we lay down this book, as we have laid down others, wondering if any attempt at this will be crowned by success. For the story of their stories is pre-eminently *the* story of them all. It is better, a thousand times, than "Jane Eyre", than "Wuthering Heights". And we know why. It is flawless. They are not.

THE PLAYBOY OF THE PRESS

By Silas Bent

W. R. Hearst: An American Phenomenon. *By John K. Winkler. Simon & Schuster. $4.00.*

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST is in direct descent from the elder James Gordon Bennett. The old *Herald,* which got out four extras on a horse race and sent Stanley into Africa to find Livingstone, was the pioneer of newspaper stunts; and Bennett, who first conceived a journalism for juveniles, boasted that he had given to Washington dispatches "their present light and amusing character". He understood the uses of vaudeville in building circulation; Hearst merely elaborated upon the technique. It is true that Bennett never formed an independent political party, even of such insignificance as Hearst's abortive adventure; and he never started a war, although his championship, for revenue only, of the slavery cause played its part in precipitating secession; whereas Hearst and the elder Pulitzer, in their competition for readers, are generally credited—or discredited—with having incited this country to bully and rob Spain. The practices of the modern daily, nevertheless, are practices which Bennett originated; and he cut the news patterns which now dominate our press and subject it to the ridicule of its public.

It is difficult to go along with Mr. Winkler, therefore, when he exclaims almost at

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the outset of his biography of Hearst: "Who then could foresee that this pale, placid, smiling adolescent was to sweep over the surface and depths of journalism, revolutionizing completely its methods and its morals . . ." Hearst has revolutionized nothing. On the entertainment side he has imitated Bennett, on the crusading side the elder Pulitzer. Yet Mr. Winkler does him a service, and adds an important document to America's library of journalism, by setting down in detail his meritorious accomplishments. For the span of a generation Hearst has been the scapegoat of American publishers. Editors guilty of hypocrisies and fakeries as bad as his have lifted their hands in self-righteous horror at his goings-on. All the Californian's faults, and some which never existed, have been trumpeted into the ears of the public, while there has never been acknowledgment from his competitors of his virtues.

The extraordinary unanimity of this attitude is a little perplexing. It is not enough to attribute it solely to a provincial jealousy of this outsider, whose entrance into the New York field created such a stir as no New York publisher had ever accomplished. Certainly there was no moral revulsion back of it, for Hearst has never done anything worse than other editors, whose misdeeds went unwhipped of their fellows. I think perhaps Hearst's aloofness, his delusions of personal grandeur, his cynicism and his unabashed peccadilloes, his prankish irresponsibility and brazen inconsistencies—his personality, in a word—contributed to the bitterness of his contemporaries. Mr. Winkler is quite right when he speaks of this personality as "mystifying". One of Hearst's high executives once said to me: "He's an Oriental, that's all; he doesn't think as we do, about women or politics or newspapers or anything else". And I note that Mr. Winkler speaks of him as "oriental-minded". This may be an attempt to escape an explanation by tying on a tag. It is as far below the surface as Mr. Winkler's brightly anecdotal book goes. And at least it is an acknowledgment that Hearst's mental processes are marked by peculiarities.

I doubt whether Mr. Winkler's book gives us a quite clear notion of Hearst's social significance, although he attempts to do so, or whether he makes plain the influence Hearst has exercised by indirection over other newspaper publishers. He has documented pretty fully the stolen Archbold letters, by which Hearst revealed the manner in which Standard Oil bribed national and State legislators; and he has given us a vivid account of the Hearst-Pulitzer warfare, which brought forth the phrase "yellow journalism". I think Hearst himself will like the book; more than that, I think it a useful, although uncritical, picture of an amusing and interesting factor in the modern American press.

THE FATHER OF THE MAN

By John E. Lind

THE INNER WORLD OF CHILDHOOD. *By Frances G. Wickes. Appleton. $3.00.*
REBUILDING THE CHILD. *By Frank Howard Richardson. Putnam. $2.00.*
THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSONALITY. *By P. L. Valentine. Appleton. $2.50.*

NOWADAYS eager-eyed hosts of searchers after the fuller life sit at the feet of this or that prophet. On one cultural level the oracle will be a swami, on another a psycho-analyst, and on a third a theosophist, or a drugless healer, or any other fluent expounder of the great unknown. Dimly aware of personality defects, crippling complexes and all sorts of psychic inadequacies, the searchers troop expectantly from one cult to another, looking for some kind of miraculous rebirth.

Never has there been such interest in the mechanics of the psyche. The matron who ten years ago had her appendix out now seeks relief from an Electra complex, married couples whose troubles antedate Judge Lindsey recount their woes to an analyst; and the works of Stekel, Freud and Jung enjoy a *pizzicato* reading in the most select boarding schools. All this wave of popular interest in psychology has, of course, its large components of novelty and pruriency, but besides these ingredients there is ap-

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parently a real desire to know more of mental mechanisms.

One of the by-products of this movement has been an awaking of interest in the child. Courses are given in child-psychology; parent-teachers' associations and juvenile courts are springing up everywhere. Every month sees new books on childhood and its problems. Among these books there are few so illuminating as the one by Mrs. Wickes, so far as it goes. She is evidently a disciple of Professor Jung; indeed the book bears a short introduction by him. In Jung's psychology the relation of the child to its family is of paramount importance. Much of his after life bears the mould impressed upon him during these formative years. The image of his father affects his relation to his employer and to other men, the ideal of his mother colors his later love life. Sometimes he never gets completely away from the circle of his childish interests, and becomes a dependent, timid adult.

In her book Mrs. Wickes has discussed some of the problems met in dealing with difficult children. She has shown by many examples how the personality-failings of the parents have reacted upon the growing personality of the child. The unduly harsh father may produce either a weak, submissive child who grows into a white rabbit sort of adult, or a child who revolts early and becomes a social outcast. The parent who has emotional difficulties is unable to deal with the same sort of situation arising in his children's lives.

Extremely interesting is the section dealing with imaginary companions: Some children project some part of their personality outside of themselves, clothe it with human attributes and make a playmate of it. This is very similar to the mechanism involved in cases of dual personality. Such problems are far beyond the comprehension of the average parent, who looks upon childish phantasies as sheer nonsense, or worse still as naughtiness calling for punishment. Such a parent will have an entirely different attitude toward the child after reading what Mrs. Wickes has to say about this subject.

The author also discusses the problem of sex-education, although in a somewhat general way and without any specific directions as to how the child should actually be taught. Much of Mrs. Wickes's book will not be comprehended by the layman unversed in the newer psychology. It is quite evident, however, that she herself has a thorough understanding of children, and a careful reading of her book will at least result in a more sympathetic attitude toward children.

Doctor Richardson's book may be considered as the absolute reverse of Mrs. Wickes's. His book deals with the problem of children who suffer from malnutrition and who consequently are unable to adjust to life. In another book ("Parenthood and the Newer Psychology") Doctor Richardson has discussed the applications of modern psychiatry to juvenile problems. His present book only touches on the mentality of the child as affected by his physical condition.

Professor Valentine's present volume deals with the theme which has become so popular a topic lately, that is, the nature of personality. He is dealing, of course, with a subject which cannot be defined, or even explained with any exactness.

The personality may be said to be the sum of all the impressions made by an individual's qualities, mental and physical, upon his associates. It may also be defined in many other ways. Valentine defines it as "the sum total of one's habit dispositions". His book is an intelligent and adequate presentation of the current knowledge on the subject. When he comes, however, to his ultimate chapter, "How to create Personality", he attempts a task which is far beyond the scope of his book and is forced to deal in generalities. Personality is so strictly an individual affair that it is highly improbable that maxims for improving or altering it can be laid down. An inadequate or warped personality must be analyzed and the exact nature of the difficulty discovered before any reconstructive measures can be suggested.

Professor Valentine's advice to get rid of bad habits and acquire good ones is all very well, but will hardly be of material assistance to the aberrant. His book, as a whole, however, is a succinct presentation of the subject and is nowhere beyond the comprehension of the lay reader.

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THEATRICAL WARES

By Glenn Hughes

IN THE books of plays before me, Luigi Pirandello leaps immediately into the foreground with his *One-Act Plays* (Dutton, $2.50); not because his eleven one-acters here collected are the strongest in our foreign group, but because they are the cleverest. Pirandello is sharp. He may be too argumentative; he may have a fixed idea; but he is sharp, ingenious, and witty. He excites and entices one. From the first play in the volume, "The Imbecile", with its diabolical plot and its breath-taking suspense, to the last play, "The Jar", with its riotous foolery (a folk-piece with the combined charm of Molière and Lady Gregory), he entertains us superbly. It seems to me that no one writing for the theater today has more sheer inventive ability than he has. These plays make one sorry that so few professional theaters can make use of the one-acter. Such cream to the amateurs!

Scarcely less skillful, one must admit, are the *Four Plays,* by Serafin and Joaquin Quintero (Little, Brown, $2.50). Not short, yet not long, these pieces display adequately the qualities for which their authors are famous: grace of style, simplicity of action, mastery of characterization, and warmth of sentiment. To read these plays is to immerse oneself in the sunlight and music of Andalusia; to wander in a world so quaint as to be dream-like, and at the same time real. The Quinteros are said to have written more than a hundred and fifty plays, and of all these the best is said to be the first one included in the present volume, "The Women Have Their Way". Best or not, it is an excellent bit of craftsmanship—sparing of words and faultless in structure. One follows it with the restful assurance that a master-hand is guiding its action, that no disconcerting bumps can possibly be encountered. One is quite willing to believe that a hundred and fifty other plays have served as exercises to this composition.

We have now to consider two plays of German origin, both concerned with older periods. Alfred Neumann's *The Patriot* (Boni & Liveright, $2.00), so great a success in Europe, so unfortunate a failure in America, has to do with the overthrow of Tsar Paul I of Russia in the year 1801. The principal character, Count Pahlen, is undoubtedly one of the most compelling personalities in recent drama—a conspirator who combines within himself the zeal of a patriot, the craftiness of a fanatic, the courage of a martyr, the calmness of a general, the self-consciousness of Hamlet. What a web he weaves around the mad Tsar! How tragically is he enmeshed in his own web! This play has in it more real excitement than a half-dozen so-called mystery melodramas; and besides, it has the authentic color of life. It is so rich in theatrical appeal that one acts it as one reads. A superb play, exceedingly well translated by Ashley Dukes. By comparison, Bruno Frank's *Twelve Thousand* (Knopf, $2.00) strikes one as rather thin. Careful consideration, however, leads one to the conclusion that thin though it is, it achieves a decided effect. Laid at the time of the American Revolution, it depicts the bartering of men, between a German prince and a representative of King George III of England, for military service in the war against the Colonies. The present deal involves the sale of twelve thousand of these mercenaries, and the plot concludes with the discovery and obstruction of the deal by Frederick, King of Prussia. One is amazed, upon finishing the play, that so little complication has been introduced—that so little story has been unfolded. Yet such keen interest has been aroused by the single situation that disappointment can scarcely be felt. As Mr. George Jean Nathan in his foreword points out, it is refreshing to encounter a modern German play that is so simple, so straightforward, so unencumbered

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by either heavy philosophy or chaotic expressionistic effects. Even a Frenchman would be forced to admire its unity, its clarity.

Our final entry in this group of importations is by way of being a classic of contemporary drama: *The Good Hope* (Samuel French, $2.50), by the Dutch dramatist, Herman Heijermans, who died in 1924. This play, his most important work, was written in 1900, and is still to be seen on the New York Stage, in the repertoire of Miss Le Gallienne's Civic Theater. Twenty-eight years ago it was a play of specific interest, for it attacked the evil of Dutch shipping laws, which allowed men to go needlessly to their death in rotten ships; today it is a play of more general significance—a beautifully human and moving tragedy. It must be admitted that a work which is so definitely propagandist in motive must be wonderfully executed to retain its hold in the theater so long after its initial purpose has been fulfilled. Like Galsworthy, Heijermans triumphed over the timeliness of his theme by means of his profound characterization.

An examination of the American plays on our list will reveal considerable diversity. Bartlett Cormack's *The Racket* (Samuel French, $1.50) well-known by now through its success on the stage, commands immediate admiration on the basis of its gripping vitality and its extraordinary verity. Although the author in his introduction reprimands those who see in the characters of his play the portraits of actual persons, he surely could expect nothing else, particularly when his scene is laid in Chicago. No doubt it has been remarked before, but it is worth remarking again, that our theater is on the upgrade when its most popular melodramas bear such a close relation to life, and are written so intelligently. To supplant "The Bat", "The Monster", and "The Cat and the Canary", with "Broadway", "Chicago", and "The Racket", is to exchange the childish and the meaningless for the mature and the significant. The sure satire and the almost complete absence of hokum combine to place "The Racket" at the head of these important new dramatizations of the more violent phases of our big-city life.

Just what sort of playwright George Kelly is becoming seems to me a question. His most recent work, *Behold the Bridegroom* (Little, Brown, $1.50), while giving further evidence of his keen understanding of human nature, shows a lessening emphasis on two of his earlier preoccupations: the typically American character, and a brilliantly satirical style. Although the new play is well-knit and impressively sincere, it is unnecessarily sombre and rather deficient in local coloring. Coming from the hand of the average playwright, it would seem remarkably good; but coming from the author of "The Show-Off" it is a trifle disappointing. One catches from it the echo of Pinero, and one shudders slightly as that echo starts the ghost of Paula Tanqueray. This may be unfair to Mr. Kelly, but after all, our brightest composer of comedies has no business turning melancholy.

We come now upon two plays from the New Playwrights' Theater. The first, *The Belt,* by Paul Sifton (Macaulay, $2.00), is possessed of many virtues. It contains scenes which are unusually absorbing, and many passages of its dialogue fascinate by their crude reality. Even the expressionistic episodes, wherein the belt, the moving line of men and machines, is intruded, achieve a marked effectiveness. On the other hand, the play goes to pieces two or three times. The actors are left in an almost helpless position while the author struggles to pull them out. It is another robot play, this time Detroit robots, robbed of their souls by the Old Man (Henry Ford), who is all but called by name. Occasionally the author goes out of his way to satirize Mr. Ford, for instance, when he drags in an old-fashioned dance, New England fiddler and all. There is a trifle too much straining for sympathy with automobile-factory workers, and as for the representation of the Old Man, one is inclined to doubt its justness. The second play, *Earth,* by Em Jo Basshe (Macaulay, $2.00)—is very much the sort of thing one would expect from a Russian-born American who decided to explore the heart and soul of the Negro. Mr. Basshe has dug deeply, but he has lost his way in the dark. It is demanded of a dramatist that he illuminate

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with clear artistic vision the material which he unearths.

Much, better, because of fuller knowledge and because of clearer vision, are the short plays of Negro life by Paul Green contained in his new volume, *In the Valley, and other Carolina Plays* (Samuel French, $2.50). Five of the eleven plays in the collection have been published previously; seven are presented for the first time. Among the five reprints are the popular "In Aunt Mahaly's Cabin", "The No 'Count Boy", and "The Man Who Died at Twelve O'Clock". Mr. Green, a recent Pulitzer Prize winner, and one of the most promising discoveries in American drama since the revelation of Eugene O'Neill, has matured swiftly in his art, and is already a more than able playwright. No one has dramatized Negro life so well—so truthfully and so poetically. We may say of these plays what we said of Pirandello's—they are worthy of the best professional production, though the fact is that because of their brevity they will belong chiefly to the amateur stage.

Tom Cushing's *The Devil in the Cheese* (Samuel French, $1.50) which brightened Broadway the season before last, is a highly diverting comedy with a splendid second act and a rather weak third. It is a strictly commercial piece of writing filled with theatrically appealing but woefully improbable incidents, compensating for these by several deft characterizations and a good deal of ingenuous, Tarkingtonian dialogue. It is of little importance, except to producers who are looking for a light comedy with a pleasant amount of novelty. Of more importance to readers, but a great deal less to producers, is the volume entitled *Nine Plays,* by Charles Reznikoff ($3.00). This book, published by the author (who even set the type and did the press-work), will very likely miss much of the appreciation it deserves because of the conventional prejudices against author-sponsored publications. My own opinion is that Mr. Reznikoff is an excellent writer and an excellent printer. He is, first of all, a poet, and his plays are written in a kind of free verse which is beautifully adapted to dramatic themes. In this medium he has achieved great beauty. I should say, indeed, that he is one of the most satisfying free verse writers in America. And he has devised what is almost a new dramatic form —a concise, episodic, impressionistic form which, while not well adapted to the theater, is decidedly effective to the reader.

Finally, we have an anthology: *Fifty More Contemporary One-Act Plays,* edited by the indefatigable Frank Shay (Appleton, $5.00). In this companion-volume to his earlier collection of similar nature and scope, Mr. Shay has assembled plays of all kinds. Their only similarities are brevity and adaptability to the amateur theater. They are obviously unequal in quality, but then, who could hope to find fifty first-rate plays which had not already been made available? The contributors include a certain number of celebrities, and a large number of little-known writers. Among the former are: Heywood Broun, John Golden, Paul Green, Kenyon Nicholson, and Eugene O'Neill. Among the latter are—but it would no doubt be better taste not to mention these, especially since I find myself one of them.

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THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF LYBA

By Pitts Sanborn

THE RIVER BETWEEN. *By Louis Forgione. Dutton. $2.50.*

AFTER "Reamer Lou", that quasi-picaresque story of the Staten Island shipyards and their neighboring boarding-houses and beaches, Mr. Forgione in "The River Between" carries his readers northward and across the Hudson to an Italian settlement bordering on the Palisades.

Here we find a world which is its own cosmos, and traditions that run back to a fabled time when earth and water and sky were of one kinship, and when man without amazement or bravado could, like Racine's Phèdre, hail the sun as grandsire. The conflicting motives, the warring emotions, stand out in a continuity that is contemptuous of the accidents of human circumstance. The river which in leaden tyranny moves between is the symbol of all life in its unappeasable hunger and its tacit flow.

These people of the river bank are as much the pawns of an overmastering fate as Hardy's men and women of Wessex. A fold of the Palisades holds their earthy drama like a hollow of Egdon Heath, and always there is the river with its sombre remembrance for them of dazzling isle-strewn waters cut by the prows of Tyrian traders and lashed by Grecian triremes into iridescent foam. An immigrant foreman and his gang engaged in building-construction at the behest of the Mammons of New Jersey righteousness might be raising temples on the Sicilian islands to the gracious gods of Hellas. There is Æschylean spaciousness in the epic canvas of their woes and struggles.

If Hardy and Ibsen, moulding their gray northern tragedies, have sounded the deep note of classic antiquity, Mr. Forgione proclaims it here in flaming chords, as have those other ancients of a modern provenance, the living Sem Benelli and Gabriele d'Annunzio. Creatures of an unsparing destiny, Demetrio Lyba, the aging giant; his troubled son, Oreste; his unacknowledged daughter, Serafina, and Oreste's tormented, covetous wife, Rose, are a group that suggest the protagonists of *L'Amore dei Tre Re* and of *La Città Morta,* and, likewise, if at one degree removed, of "Jude the Obscure" and of "Little Eyolf".

Justice, however, to this strange and relentless story can be done only in the fire-girt language of its author. Take this picture of Manhattan at nightfall, seen from the edge of the Palisades: "Meanwhile on the other side there gradually took shape and form out of the eastern gloom a broad, lordly river moving black and glossy, and beyond it a metropolis on which night had come like a fantastic spring with the blossoming of myriad lights".

There is the incisive limning of the characters: "Serafina was beautiful . . . . There was heat in the very undulation of her blue-black hair, now braided and twined around her head like beaten iron, in the lips that curled out wistfully . . ." "Square and dark against the golden glow of the hall lamp, like a mosaic larger than life, unstirred, Byzantine in his solemn straightness, stood Demetrio, dressed as for a formal visit." . . . . "Oreste propped his face in his hands and the arm muscles formed out into massive ridges! And as he remained there, breathing deeply, head lowering slowly till only the smooth black hair was apparent, one could have discerned the Ocean in this dusky, sun-bronzed giant, the conqueror of rebellious sails in his huge forearms."

Nietzsche declared that music must be Mediterraneanized. Mr. Forgione has focused upon the Hudson palisades the fierce light of that midland sea, and in the crucible of his fancy the story of a house of laborers beside a dusty suburban roadway glows with the fiery exaltation of antique poetry.

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, in Co-operation with the Public Libraries of America

The breaking of a record, whether it be that for consuming the largest number of pies in a given time or for flying around the world, is always a matter for the attention of the conscientious recorder, if not for jubilation. This month 'The Bridge of San Luis Rey" has broken all records for books in demand by library borrowers. Out of some two hundred and seventy libraries reporting, seven-eighths of them, two hundred and forty-three to be precise, give Thornton Wilder's book first place in popularity, and most of the remaining eighth give it second place. While that is a matter which does not directly concern anybody except the author and his publishers, it is set down here to provide further justification for the critics who have been substantially unanimous in acclaiming this book as the best piece of American fiction to appear in a long time. —*F. P. S.*

FICTION

1.	The Bridge of San Luis Rey	*Thornton Wilder*	A. & C. Boni
2.	Wintersmoon	*Hugh Walpole*	Doubleday
3.	Kitty	*Warwick Deeping*	Knopf
4.	Jalna	*Mazo de la Roche*	Little
5.	Death Comes for the Archbishop	*Willa Cather*	Knopf
6.	Red Rust	*Cornelia James Cannon*	Little
7.	Giants in the Earth	*O. E. Rolvaag*	Harper
8.	Claire Ambler	*Booth Tarkington*	Doubleday
9.	Sorrell & Son	*Warwick Deeping*	Knopf
10.	A President is Born	*Fannie Hurst*	Harper
11.	The Ugly Duchess	*Lion Feuchtwanger*	Viking
12.	Dusty Answer	*Rosamond Lehmann*	Holt

GENERAL

1.	Mother India	*Katherine Mayo*	Harcourt
2.	Trader Horn	*Alfred Aloysius Horn and Ethelreda Lewis*	Simon
3.	Napoleon	*Emil Ludwig*	Liveright
4.	Disraeli	*André Maurois*	Appleton
5.	The Royal Road to Romance	*Richard Halliburton*	Bobbs
6.	"We"	*Charles Lindbergh*	Putnam
7.	Bismarck	*Emil Ludwig*	Little
8.	Strange Interlude *	*Eugene O'Neill*	Liveright
9.	The Story of Philosophy	*Will Durant*	Simon
10.	The Glorious Adventure	*Richard Halliburton*	Bobbs
11.	My Life *	*Isadora Duncan*	Liveright
12.	Safari *	*Martin Johnson*	Putnam

* This title has not previously appeared in the Monthly Score.

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News Story Contest

COMMENT ON APRIL PRIZE AWARD

By Casper S. Yost

Editor, St. Louis, Mo., Globe Democrat

IN MY judgment THE BOOKMAN'S prize for the best newspaper story published in April should be awarded to W. A. S. Douglas, of the Washington Bureau of the Baltimore *Sun,* for his report of the burial of Floyd Bennett, published in the Baltimore *Sun* of April 28.

In view of the fact that the first award of THE BOOKMAN'S series was made to the reporter of a funeral, I am reluctant to give special distinction to reports of this nature, but nevertheless I am constrained to do so by the manifest superiority, as it appears to me, of the work of Mr. Douglas in this instance over the other offerings submitted to me for this decision, the basis of consideration being a bona fide news report "that is properly literature even while it is, at the same time, daily journalism", as THE BOOKMAN expressed the conditions in its original announcement.

The workmanship of this report is excellent. Mr. Douglas has covered all the facts of the event, and without undue emphasis upon any detail, or without any exaggeration, he has given dramatic effect to his story. In the simple beauty of his narrative he has revealed the underlying significance of the incident and made the reader to see and to feel its meaning and value. It is good reporting refined by its literary quality.

PRIZE STORY FOR APRIL

FLOYD BENNETT LAID TO REST AS ELEMENTS RAGE

Dirge Sounded by Wind and Rain as Hero is Buried at Arlington

HOOVER AND BYRD AMONG MULTITUDE

Eight Enlisted Navy Men Lower Body of Polar Flyer into Tomb

By W. A. S. DOUGLAS.

[*Washington Bureau of The Sun.*]

From the Baltimore (Maryland) Sun, April 28 1928.

Washington, April 27.—Up on top of the highest hill in Arlington Cemetery—as close as they could rest him in death to the skies he had loved to roam in life—Machinist Floyd Bennett, United States Navy was buried this afternoon in a driving wind and rainstorm, a fitting dirge from the elements the hero had dared and met and conquered.

"Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friend," said Chaplain Curtis H. Beckins as Bennett was being consigned to the grave.

Taps Sounded

As this was spoken the ropes which held the flag-draped coffin were loosened in the hands of Bennett's eight comrades—like himself, enlisted men in the navy. Then a rattle of bullets, repeated three times, and followed by the long, mournful notes of a bugle blowing "Taps." Another prayer from the chaplain and the services ended.

Floyd Bennett, modest, unassuming, self-effacing hero and companion of heroes, was asleep among other heroes. All around him, up and down the slopes of his own Virginia hills, were strewn the white stone tents of other soldiers and sailors—little white slabs by the thousands marking the graves of those who had gone forth to war, A marker atop the highest hill, Floyd Bennett's hill, told his story and their story:

On Fame's eternal camping ground
Their silent tents are spread.
And glory guards with solemn round
The bivouac of the dead.

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Rests Near War Dead

To the east of his own hill are spread the hundreds of slabs beneath which sleep, as Bennett sleeps, the dead of the great war.

Now has come Bennett, the polar flyer, to join these men who laid down their lives in France in honorable combat. The difference was that Bennett had laid down his life for the nation that these new comrades had fought against.

Blinding rain fell as they brought the body from the Union Station. Things were hurried along, perhaps in a rather unseemingly manner, to anybody who did not know Bennett. Other heroes have been carried in slow, dignified procession all along the way. But Bennett, the polar flyer, moved fast in life and his wish would have been to go along speedily in death.

Hoover Pays Homage

The crowds waited beside the grave for hours. The rain poured and the wind moaned, but the throng increased. Herbert Hoover, arriving at 2.30, stood for more than two hours to pay homage.

There was no shelter other than a skimpy tent over the grave, and another, even smaller, which covered the hundred or more wreaths that had been sent by the high and by the low, one from the President of the United States and one from a sailor who had enlisted with Bennett eleven years ago.

Between these two tributes were separate piles of flowers from representatives of the great nations of the world, from Cabinet officers, from admirals, from generals, from Governors and from States.

Truly the world was paying homage to Machinist Bennett.

Planes Hover Above

Planes hovered over the hillside for a while, coming from escort duty to the funeral cortege. They droned high up in the heavens, one great bomber circling about with engine shut off as it passed over Bennett's own hillside. Then came a group of five navy airships, which circled twice and flew away as the sounds of the navy band were heard from the hollow below the cemetery where lies Fort Myer.

Two companies of sailors followed the musicians, which procedure is not at all according to proper navy rank and precedence. Such a gathering means that a commissioned officer is being buried, and Bennett held only a machinist's rating. But the navy broke its precedent and, in passing, would not have had to break it but for Bennett himself. He refused commissioned rank when it was offered him after his return from the north pole flight with Commander Richard E. Byrd.

Byrd Crowded Out

The six-horse gun caisson halted on the brow of the hill. Bennett's enlisted comrades bore the coffin to the edge of the grave. The crowd forced the ropes and thronged over the inclosure until they stood close packed around the coffin. Passageway had to be forced for the widow and the dead man's two brothers. Commander Byrd, unable to get closer, had to stand on the edge of the crowded mourners, almost an outsider at the burial of the man who had crossed over one pole with him and had been designated to accompany him on his approaching attempt to conquer the other.

Liturgy Is Begun

The Rev. L. E. Smith, pastor of the Christian Church, of Norfolk, Va., Bennett's pastor, followed the coffin and began the funeral services. Behind him came Chaplain Beckins in the cap, the gown and surplice of the Episcopal Church.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," the Rev. Mr. Smith read in loud, clear tones. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures"—

And so he read through the Twenty-third Psalm. All around in the valley of the dead stretched green "pastures," bright with the rain and losing none of their spring sheen through the greyness of the skies. Over the "pastures" were thousands and thousands of white slabs above the graves of the flyer's new companionship of men.

The words Chaplain Beckins used epitomized Bennett's deed as no other words could have done:

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend."

German Ambassador Weeps

Tears ran down the cheeks of the slim blonde-haired German Ambassador. Surely the man who had died as a result of bringing succor to his countrymen must have forever healed the wound between the two nations.

Earth pattered on the coffin and the throngs moved away. The flyer was at rest on his hillside. Beside him on his right lies Admiral Robert E. Peary, discoverer of the earth's rim over which his neighbor flew. At his head rest Lieut.-Gen. John Coulter Bates and Brig.-Gen. Morgan Lewis Smith. On his left is Lieut.-Gen. Samuel B. M. Young. Machinist Bennett sleeps his last sleep in a goodly company.

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BOSTON

A Contemporary Historical Novel

By Upton Sinclair

(A summary of the preceding instalments will be found on page xi, front advertising section.)

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Graft Ring

I

QUINCY THORNWELL was dining with his Aunt Cornelia. He called her that, scrupulously, though he was only two years her junior; he had done it, scrupulously, for forty-five years, since he had been a freshman at Harvard, and she had married into the older generation. Every so often he came to dinner, as a mark of respect, and because family solidarity must be maintained as the last trace of order in a disintegrating world. For the same reason he put on his honorific clothes; a matter of ritual, a symbol of membership in a group which did the right thing always, as a matter of course and without discussion.

Cornelia also did her part. Her dinner-gown was years out of fashion, but that was a sign that she was superior to fashion. Her little apartment was in a tenement, but that did not matter, because everybody knew it was eccentricity, not necessity. Visiting members of the family had brought boxes now and then, quite casually, and almost without mentioning it; so now she had silver, and shining crystal, and old family china, and linen with strawberry designs, lighted by four tall thin tapering candles. There were flowers in the center of the table—sent with Quincy's card. The Negro maid wore a white cap and apron, and had learned how to serve a meal, because Deborah had sent a real servant to give her lessons. No matter how "red" your poor mother may turn in her old age, she must be kept in touch with the decencies of life.

Quincy—continue to pronounce him like a disease of the throat—was dieting under a doctor's orders, and shrinking up rapidly in the process, so that there were more wrinkles in his face every time you met him. He had become almost entirely bald, with a bright pink scalp. His nose and cheeks were red, with fine little veins of purple—his blue blood showing through, he would say, mockingly. The extraordinary thing was that when he opened his mouth in laughter, which he did frequently, you saw a cavern of exactly the same color; it seemed unhuman, and when you knew him well you realized that it was.

No more canvas-backs, cooked a quick brown on the outside and deep purple inside, according to the fastidious taste of an habitué of the Somerset Club! No more good honest roast beef, not even any more Boston beans, since they too were high protein, and suspected of uric acid! You must have fish for Quincy, and then chicken—white meat, if you please; and no mayonnaise on the salad—the devil of it was it made you talk about food, and started other people telling their diets, and the women on their everlasting reducing. Thence the company got on the subject of drink, and after that there was nothing but the private life of their bootleggers. Good conversation was dead in Boston.

What Quincy meant by good conversation was gossip about the hundred or two persons he knew, and the thousand or two he knew about. They were always doing queer things or getting into trouble; he would tell the tales with comical embellishments, and throw back his head and chuckle.

He talked about the family. Poor old Father was failing fast; he had to have a man to go about with him. He still insisted on riding a pony along with the Scatterbridge children, so the attendant had to have a pony too—impossible to imagine a more comical spectacle than that family procession, riding all over the estate but never going off it, for fear of automobiles.

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James Scatterbridge was one of the unsafe ones. Tried to do too much with those enormous mills. It seemed there would never be any market for cotton goods again. Rupert and John Quincy—that was Quincy's older brother—were having the devil's own time pulling James through. Both of them were showing the strain of running all the finance of New England. To the devil with it, said Quincy; enough for him if he could watch the beast, judge the right moment, and step in and slice off a juicy chunk. Rupert and John scolded him because he didn't produce anything; and he chuckled—a fine mess they had produced!

The maid brought in a pitcher of steaming hot water, with a couple of glasses; and Quincy took from his hip-pocket a silver flask, comfortably curved to fit that portion of the anatomy. He understood that he had to "bring his own" when he came to Aunt Cornelia's, because she was engaged in more serious kinds of law-breaking and could not afford to expose herself to the lesser risks.

So he talked about prohibition. They were bringing drink in by the schooner-load, everywhere along the coast, every night that didn't happen to be moonlit or stormy. Yet the prices got higher and higher, and the quality worse and worse. You might get ever so good a bootlegger, investigate his ancestry, his police record, his church affiliations and all that, and still you couldn't be sure because the rascal dealers would fool him. They were making synthetic stuff in the cellars of Boston slums, putting it on boats, unloading it on shore again, and selling it for Canadian Scotch. The "booties" were being held up all along the line; they would pay the police where they started from, and then the police would send a motor-cycle cop after them to hold them up and get some more.

It was a good thing for labor, Quincy admitted; made it possible to get work done on Monday, so for that reason the law would probably stay. But it was mighty demoralizing; graft was spreading so fast, you hardly knew the old New England. Quincy had been talking that day with a politician in a board-room, watching the course of stocks, and this politician had quoted the value of the pickpocket, burglary, and confidence-men concessions of Suffolk and Middlesex counties. "What do you think of that?" said Quincy, and had one of his convulsions of chuckling.

"It makes me think of something I want to ask you," said Cornelia. "I also have connections with the underworld nowadays."

"I know," said Quincy, "those two wops of yours."

"No," said his aunt, "not the wops, but the officials who are prosecuting them. I need a lot of advice, provided it can be confidential."

The old gentleman became instantly serious. "My dear Aunt Cornelia, I gossip about every family in the world but one!"

II

Cornelia set forth her problem. The Italians who were trying to save the lives of Sacco and Vanzetti found no difficulty in believing that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was corrupt. They knew all the bootleggers—some of them were bootleggers—and were used to paying the police. But Cornelia herself found it hard to believe that the woman who told them they could buy the freedom of Sacco and Vanzetti for fifty thousand dollars really knew what she was talking about, and had the power she claimed.

Quincy Thornwell looked thoughtful. "Fifty thousand dollars is a lot of money, Aunt Cornelia, even for our politicians. My advice would be, say forty, and when you come to the real showdown, it will be thirty."

It might have been possible to see a humorous aspect to that reply, but Cornelia was not in a smiling mood. "You mean it is genuine, then?"

Quincy answered that it surprised him a little, coming from Plymouth and Norfolk counties. Suffolk everybody knew about, it was Irish, and the decent people had moved out and let the "micks" have their own way. Suffolk County comprised the city of Boston proper; and years ago, when it had gone Democratic, the old aristocracy of wealth and fashion had begun an exodus, and now lived in suburban towns, where they could run their local governments and spend their own taxes. They regarded Boston as the place where they came to clip their coupons and do their shopping and go to the theater. So long as the politicians refrained from stealing the banks and public buildings, the blue-bloods generally let them alone.

"It sounds like regular City Hall stuff," continued Quincy. "When they arrested those wops, the gang thought they had no

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friends and could be sent up without trouble, and it would be a good mark for the police. But now it appears they have money, and money is more than good marks. It seems obvious enough."

"Quincy, do you think a civilization can endure on the basis of corruption like that?"

"No, of course it can't."

"You give up our civilization?"

"I gave it up a generation ago, when I saw we didn't have sense enough to keep the scum of Europe out. We built a nation on the basis of self-government, and we could do it because we had people who were capable of self-government. But when we let ourselves be overrun by hordes of peasants, we signed our own death-warrant. A few of us old fogies protested, but we couldn't stop it, and we gave up. I said to Uncle Josiah thirty years ago, I wouldn't touch politics again with a ten-foot pole. And Father said the same."

"Josiah insisted we could teach them, Quincy."

"The last thing in the world they want is to learn anything from us. They hate us because we are different, and better, and we know it. All they want is to rob us of everything we have. You saw those wops plundering the shoe-companies—and now the Irish step in to plunder the wops. That's the way it goes in the jungle."

"But Quincy, the government in Plymouth County is Yankee, and so are most of the voters!"

"That's all right, but if you dig into it, you'll find it's the Irish ring, mark my words. Some of the loot will go to Larry Shay, the head fixer for the crime concessions."

Said Cornelia, "I went to see Shay about this case. Henry told me he'd be a good lawyer to try it".

"None better in Massachusetts. What did he say?"

"He wanted fifty thousand dollars."

Quincy had one of his spells of chuckling. "And you didn't notice the coincidence in price! Don't you see Aunt Cornelia—Larry figured that you, being a simple old lady, really believed the wops to be innocent, so you'd be willing to face a trial. But the Italians wouldn't share your touching faith, so they'd talk turkey. If the politicians had been wise, they'd have warned the Italians to leave you out of it."

"As a matter of fact, they did," admitted Cornelia. "They tried to keep Lee Swenson out also. The woman has refused to meet him."

"Well, there you are," said Quincy. "He has a bad reputation—he's a labor-agitator and a publicity-seeker, and they want to deal with criminals. No, Aunt Cornelia, you don't have to worry about it, all you have to do is raise the money. Have you got it in sight?"

"I don't know. Some of the Italians have hinted it might be got."

"Send out the boys and raid another payroll!" said Quincy, with a grin. "Well, I'll tell you; I'm not a millionaire, as you know, and I have to work for my money—even though it seems easy to those who never played the market. But I'll chip in a few thousand to help you out of this trouble. I think the family would put up the whole amount, if they could be sure it would teach you a lesson."

"You mean," said Cornelia, "I would never again believe in the government of Massachusetts?" There was a naughty twinkle in her eye.

But now her worldly-wise old nephew was "talking turkey" himself. "I mean that you'd take a little care of yourself, and quit fooling with anarchists."

"But Quincy, don't you think it is up to us people of the old stock to set an example? If I do this, what will be left for them?"

"Don't you really want to get your friends out of trouble?"

"Yes, but I want to get a lot of others out of trouble also. It would be a poor bargin, from our point of view, to save two men from the electric chair and leave millions in slavery."

"Now, Aunt Cornelia, don't start your Bolshevik propaganda on me! I know I'm a parasite and a bloodsucker, but every last one of your wops would take my place if he could get it; and I assure you, before he does get it he's got to fight."

To which Cornelia replied: "If you only knew how much like a Bolshevik you talk, you'd be quite shocked by yourself!"

III

The first serious split in the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee was developing over the problem of the offer to free the prisoners for fifty thousand dollars. On the one

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side was Lee Swenson, backed by Betty and Joe, who were like two blood-hounds held in leash. On the other side were some of the anarchists—those who stayed in the background and were not seen in headquarters.

Lee Swenson came to Cornelia. "Nonna, do you believe our two boys are innocent of that crime?"

"Absolutely, Lee! I cannot think of any other possibility."

"Well, I believe it too. And it seems to me we have a marvellous case to fight. I know what I'm talking about; I can make it the most famous labor case in American history, if the committee will only stand behind me and give me the funds. This offer seems just plain blackmail; the police know that Sacco and Vanzetti are innocent of the crime, but they think they've got other things on the group and expect to trade on our fears. You know how it is with the anarchists, they are liable to be deported—and maybe there are other secrets that break their nerve. Some of them want to settle; they won't say it plainly, but they are blocking my moves."

"But Lee! Yesterday Bart said to me he'd rather die than be bought out."

"I know; but Bart is in jail, and it's the committee that is pay-master. I have an idea some of them are going ahead with their plans to raise the money and close the deal. If we persist in having our way, they might throw us down and ruin us."

"Oh, surely not that!"

"You are new at the game of intrigue, Nonna. It might even happen by accident—we have got to allow for the spies on our committee. The prosecution will have one, and the Department of Justice will have one, and they probably won't even know each other. If we delay too long and talk too much, we may find ourselves arrested, charged with an effort to bribe the noble-minded authorities."

Joe and Betty had already made a few automobile excursions, following Mrs. De Falco's car. They had seen it spend a couple of evenings parked near the car of the gentleman who was to be employed for a retaining fee now reduced to forty thousand dollars. On one of these occasions a leading official's car had come up, and he had entered the house. Also Lee Swenson had investigated some "references" the woman had offered: that is to say, murder cases and other crimes which had resulted in dismissals and acquittals through her intervention. What Lee found was that when he started to question the lawyers and relatives who had negotiated these settlements they became ill at ease and refused to talk—which was to be expected under the circumstances.

Also he had an "investigator" looking into Mrs. De Falco herself. She was one of the many who hung around the courts, looking for openings to be of service to lawyers and witnesses. Ignorant foreigners who have broken the law are badly frightened, and the "runner" is a comforting friend, who helps to steer them in a strange world—and incidentally finds out how much money they have, or how much their friends can raise, so that the lawyer can fix the fee at the maximum, and then "split". Such a person soon learns the tricks of the courts, and profits by many forms of graft. The investigators reported that the fruits of Mrs. De Falco's legal labors went to maintain a home for several children! A complicated world to work in!

She persisted in refusing to see Lee Swenson under any circumstances; so Lee sent to New York for his dictograph—the one he had used in breaking up the government witnesses in a frame-up against the I. W. W. in Seattle five years previously. He set it up in the room where Felicani had been meeting Mrs. De Falco, a big barren place in an old tenement house, next door to a print-shop. He got his own stenographer, and another whom he could trust—and whom the jury would have to trust, because she had served with the A. E. F. in France! The trap was set for seven o'clock in the evening, and the De Falco woman came on schedule time and repeated her assurances of what she was able to do, and explained that it was impossible to come any lower in the price. Meantime several persons strolled casually into the room and out again, so as to be able to testify that Felicani and Mrs. De Falco were talking; and the stenographers diligently took down what they got of the conversation. But, alas, the printer next door, not having been warned of the plot, started up one of his presses, which caused the dictograph to sound like an avalanche in Switzerland!

However, part of the conversation was recorded; and now, what next? Some of the committee insisted upon waiting, they wanted to get money and mark it, and pay it to Mrs.

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De Falco. But they delayed acting, and Lee Swenson suspected they were playing for time; their real purpose was to raise the full amount and settle the case. He insisted that such a story would not lie quiet more than a day or two; so many persons knew about it, and the moment the authorities got a hint it was a matter of minutes which would act first. Joe Randall, as a newspaper man, backed up Lee in this; everything depended on how the story first reached the public. If the authorities filed a complaint, charging Felicani with an effort to purchase justice, that would be what the world would believe about the Sacco-Vanzetti Defence Committee, regardless of what evidence might later be produced. Trust the press for that!

So Lee took matters into his own hands, and filed a complaint, charging Mrs. De Falco with soliciting a bribe. It was a matter for which some of the anarchists never forgave either him or Joe. Who were these two, non-anarchists, therefore enemies of anarchism, to come in and play with the lives of two comrades? To involve Sacco and Vanzetti in an effort to use capitalist courts, which they regarded with abhorrence! Was not Mrs. De Falco herself a human being, a victim of the class system? What business had an anarchist giving information against her, and trying to send her to jail? The Italians did not hesitate to charge that Lee Swenson wanted to get the money, that he wanted a big legal case for himself.

IV

About twenty-four hours after the De Falco story was spread on the front page of all the Boston newspapers—"Reds Charge Bribery Plot to State", and so on—Cornelia's telephone rang, and she heard the voice of her oldest daughter. "Mother, is that you?"

The voice was trembling, so that Cornelia's heart started at the first sound. "What has happened?"

"Oh, Mother, the most dreadful thing! I can't tell you over the telephone! I will come at once. Be at home!" There was a sob in Deborah's voice, something rarely heard. But no chance to ask more—she hung up the receiver.

Half an hour later she came in, breathless from hurrying up the stairs. Her mother had never seen such distress on her face. Mutely Deborah held out a letter, which Cornelia took. It had a cancelled special-delivery stamp, on an ordinary envelope such as you buy at the post office, addressed on a typewriter to Mrs. Rupert Alvin at the Commonwealth Avenue address. Cornelia opened it, and found a typewritten sheet of paper, which seemed to burn her eyeballs as she read:

"Call off your daughter and your mother from the aiding and abetting of anarchists, or you and your family will live to regret it. Why do you let your daughter travel about town day and night with a young anarchist with a criminal record? Look up his wife he deserted. Do you want the world to know that your daughter sleeps with him under your mother's protection? We want no Russian free love in Boston. We will expose them in the papers if they do not get out of town, and your other daughter's wedding will be postponed again.

American Patriot."

So there was a bagful of cats turned loose, to rampage over the place, and maintain a dreadful clamor. One horror, of course, led the rest: was it true that Betty was living with a married man, and that Cornelia abetted the crime? It was a question difficult to answer without sounding cynical to a pillar of Trinity Church in the City of Boston. Cornelia said, as calmly as she could, that Betty and Joe loved each other truly, and were going to marry as soon as the law permitted, after Joe's wife had got her Reno divorce. Deborah broke down, and hid her face in her hands, because she could not contemplate such depravity in her mother and her daughter.

Said Cornelia: "They will be a perfectly respectable married couple as soon as it is over. There are some in our most fashionable society who have done the same thing".

"At least they had the decency to wait till they were divorced!"

Then the other counts of the indictment. "No, Deborah, Joe has no 'criminal record', I assure you."

"But how do you know it?"

"I know it because I know Joe. He is a fine young idealist, whom I love, and was glad to accept in his present rôle."

"An anarchist free-lover!"

"In the first place, he isn't an anarchist, but a socialist, which is the opposite pole of thought. He is much more conservative than Betty, and their honeymoon quarrels

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are over his efforts to tone her down. You should be grateful to him."

"But what does this letter mean—his 'criminal record'?"

"It is nothing but a coward's attempt to frighten and distress us. Joe was connected with the American legation in Russia, and he saw President Wilson begin his private war on the Russian people. Joe said what he thought about it, and he may have actually done something to try to stop it. If he has a 'criminal record', that is it, I am sure."

"And his wife—she is really going to get a divorce?"

"She is planning to remarry."

Deborah made a face of disgust. It did not improve the long lean features. Cornelia waited until the ugly moment was past, and then said, very gently: "There are two great improprieties, Deborah—one is love without marriage, and the other is marriage without love. The latter was my portion, and I assure you, if Betty had to choose one or the other, I am glad she chose as she did. I did not will this situation, and if they had asked my advice, I would have told them to wait. But they settled it for themselves, and it was a condition and not a theory that confronted me. Betty offered to tell you, but I could see no good in distressing you".

V

They argued the ethics of free love for a while, until Deborah's practical mind got to work at its customary task of telling other people what to do. "We must not have a scandal—now that Priscilla's wedding invitations have been sent out! We must think up some reason for Betty to go to Europe at once, and stay until the man can marry her."

"I fear you will not be able to arrange that, Deborah. Betty is wrapped up in this case of Sacco and Vanzetti, and the trial is coming in the spring. She and Joe are working over it day and night; and surely, when a young couple are busy and happy, it is not the part of wisdom to break them up."

"But this, Mother! This!" Deborah held the letter in her trembling hand. "How can we face this horrible thing?"

"We have to face it, Deborah. It is an effort to break our nerve, and it must not succeed."

"But what can we do—if they expose us?"

"How *can* they expose us? Betty lives here, and Joe visits here occasionally, but never unless I am in the apartment. Are they going to break into my home to look for evidence against my grand-daughter?"

"Betty must come back and stay with her parents at once!"

"Betty is a grown woman, responsible for her own life. I think you will have to let her make her own decisions, and face her own enemies."

They argued back and forth, and in the process Cornelia's mind became more clear. "I am quite certain nothing will happen, Deborah, except the writing of more letters. The police have spies in the office of our committee and they pick up bits of gossip, but they don't really know anything. Surely we can stand upon our family dignity and ignore anonymous slanderers! You and I and Joe and Betty are the only ones who know the facts, and we are not going to tell anyone else—except, of course, Rupert."

Poor Rupert! He was almost worried to death, his wife broke out. That dreadful man Jerry Walker was bringing a suit and charging all sorts of outrageous things; and some of Rupert's associates were quarreling with him for having got them into the mess. They had entirely forgotten how glad they were to get their share of the profits. And then this business about the Boston Elevated—had Cornelia been told about that?

"Not much, except what has been in the papers."

"Well, they are going to make all the members of the legislature testify as to their stock investments, and they are looking up the loans they got from some of the banks. They will call it bribery, of course, but it was nothing in the world except that Rupert was trying to save the Elevated from bankruptcy, and the stockholders from ruin, and those vicious politicians were holding him up, refusing to grant any increase in fares. They wouldn't vote until they got money to buy Elevated stocks. You can't imagine what the politicians are!"

"My child, I know exactly what they are—they are trying to send two of my friends to the electric chair, unless we will raise forty thousand dollars to buy them off. Betty and Joe and I have been having to make that decision in the last few days, and I think the reason you got this letter is because we refused to pay."

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Deborah sat staring before her, her tall forehead wrinkled in thought. Her surrender was not indicated by throwing up her hands, but merely by beginning to talk sensibly.

"Mother, I ought to meet that young man."

"Of course you ought—that is, provided you will behave yourself, and understand that he is your son-in-law."

"Is he—does he look like a gentleman?"

"He comes from an old Virginia family, and they think they are quite as good as we are—in fact, I understand they sometimes make fun of us, saying that we talk through our noses."

"I suppose I'll have to tell Rupert," said Deborah. "He might have one of these letters, too. I'll tell him tonight, and we'll arrange for the three of you to come to dinner."

"Thank you, my dear, that is certainly sensible."

"Well, if they are going to be married, we have to try to make it seem decent. I don't want people to say that Betty married a man she picked up off the street."

"No, it is not at all like that. You can tell people they met at the first session of the Third International in Moscow."

VI

Priscilla Quincy Adams Thornwell had been a sufficient time in her grave for it to be proper for her grand-niece, Priscilla Thornwell Alvin, to be united to the young mountain of copper. So there was another of those stately ceremonials which mark the coming and going of the generations, and advertise their social importance. Out of this union there would proceed many copper hills and branch banks, bearing the sacred names of Thornwell and Quincy and Adams and Shaw and Cabot, shuffled into new combinations. So engraved invitations were sent to all members of the clans, and the hothouses of the florists were emptied, and Trinity Church became a mid-winter bower.

Rupert and Deborah were in the grip of a terror such as had never before attended a Thornwell wedding-service. Their imaginations played with a string of horrors, which might be perpetrated by a writer of devilish anonymous letters. After all, what limit could you set to the perversity of such a creature? A bomb in the church, say in the vestibule, where it would not kill anyone, but would make a scandal heard round the world! Or perhaps what was called a "stink-bomb", that would drive everybody from the edifice! Of foul whispers by an old gipsy woman, or poison-leaflets distributed in the pews—it had happened once in Boston history. There was a moment when the hearts of Rupert and Deborah jumped into their throats—when the rector pronounced the bold challenge: "If any man can show just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter forever hold his peace!"

A dreadful silence, during which Rupert and Deborah heard a voice shout out that the younger sister of the bride was living in adultery, and therefore the family was not "eligible". But no one else heard a sound, and the ceremony was completed, and the bride and groom were whisked away to the Alvin home, where an elaborate breakfast was served to the family and intimate friends. The bride, now in travelling costume, was kissed on both cheeks by relatives male and female. Betty hugged and kissed her good older sister several times, and wished her all the respectable luck which so respectable a young lady was bound to have; and if there were tears in Betty's eyes they were not tears of shame, because Betty was lost to shame. Only her poor mother had to blush for her, and weep for the dreadful hidden secret—trembling, because the danger was not yet over—there might be poison-leaflets thrown into the departing bridal-car.

But again the fears proved baseless, and the young couple departed in blissful certainty that everything had happened exactly as it had always happened, and as it ought to happen—one and the same thing in Boston. They took the train to New York, and from there to Palm Beach, where they stopped at the most expensive hotel, and dressed themselves three times a day in the proper summer costumes, and innumerable attendants rushed this way and that to anticipate their needs.

VII

An odd experience for Cornelia and Betty—to take part in this orgy of hand-shaking and kissing—to be dipped, as it were, into an ocean of propriety and perfume, to be transported to a fairy-land of white veils and

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roses, frock-coats and silk hats and kid gloves, crystal and silver and pearl and diamond wedding-presents—and then to step into a motor-car and be carried along the Back Bay and across the river, and find themselves within the gates of an ancient stone dungeon, stained dark by factory smoke, with steel bars on the windows and steel doors clanging, and faces of grim command, faces of lowering hate, faces brutalized and degraded, marked by disease, fear, cruelty—a thousand evils which poverty, ignorance and neglect inflict upon the tormented human race.

Bart came, with the coal-dust hastily washed from his face and hands, but not from his neck and wrists. He greeted them with his smile of joy, and asked to sit near the window, in the sunshine, so rare in his life. He saw the white roses they were wearing, and learned that they were bridal roses, and travelled in fancy to the River Magra, where weddings meant fiddles and dancing and wine, in addition to flowers and white veils. Such a beautiful country, such a happy, good people—if it were not for landlord, for padrone, for wicked go-vérnment, taking boys away from home to make soldier, to make cruel war!

They talked about the case, and Bart with tact and gentleness strove to convey to his dear friends the unhappiness which was tormenting him. Never had he thought it could happen that he would be the means of sending any human being to prison, a place of wickedness and suffering like this. "Is something should not be attempting, Nonna, it is not according with filosophia anarchica. Mrs. De Falco is poor victim, is ignorant, is not blam-èd for what she do. It is principle for me—it is wrong ever to call law, to punish wit' judge and sooch thing."

"But Bart, you told Lee you would leave it to his judgment!"

"I know, I have shame for that. I am stranger, poor man, have not mooch knowledge. I think, friend have bring lawyer, he is educate, he onderstand, he try hard for helping—how can I make contraddizione? But then come Italian friend, they say, 'What is this, Vanzett', you are anarchista, you make woman be arrest? You have deny principle of whole living?' And I say, 'It is true, I have done wrong, I would better be convict' of any crime in world!' "

"Well, Bart"—it was Betty speaking—"you should have an anarchist lawyer."

"Is no soocha t'ing, Betty, is impossible for be. Should not have no lawyer. Anarchista should stand in court, should say, 'Is wicked place, is wicked sistema. You have power, you have victim in hand, you can crush him, but you cannot crush his soul, his doctrine it live, will spread to whole umane kind'."

"Then you really don't want to be saved, Bart?"

"I want for anarchismo be sav-èd."

"Joe has gone to Maine, to try to get the record of one of the witnesses for the Commonwealth that we have heard has been convicted of crime. Now, if we find it is so do you want us to use the fact? It will hurt the man's feelings, no doubt."

Vanzetti sat with brow furrowed in thought. "I not know. I have said always, it is good for speak truth. I think anarchista can speak what is truth."

"Yet you might be the cause of the man's being sent to jail again. It might turn out he is wanted by the police for something else."

Time was needed to answer that! It was a complicated world, and often it would happen that Vanzetti would agree to the proposals of Betty and Joe and Lee Swenson, and then think it over, or hear the protests of his comrades, and decide that it was not according to "filosophia anarchica". All he could say now, having brooded over the problem of Mrs. De Falco through long hours in his cell, was that he did not want her sent to jail, not even to save his life. Anyhow, he was sure the move against her would not help his cause; rather it would embitter the go-vérnment, it would make them redouble their efforts for a conviction.

"I am sorry if we have made things worse, Bart." Cornelia's words brought tears into the prisoner's eyes. He laid his hand upon her arm, and begged her pardon for his bad way of saying things; it was hard to express these complicated ideas. He was not afraid to die, and, whatever happened, they must not grieve. He was a poor, unknown man, he had talked for years unheeded; to be executed for his beliefs was perhaps the one way he could make them known. But he wanted to die with a clean conscience—not having caused a mother of several children to be sent to jail for trying to get her pitiful share of that which the rich and powerful ones of the community tried to keep for their own.

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VIII

Lee Swenson had obtained a postponement of the Sacco-Vanzetti case until the month of June, to give him time to prepare. The law of the Puritans, otherwise stern and parsimonious, would be prodigal only of delay. Sacco would sit in his cell in Dedham and wonder by what malicious turn of fate it had happened that he who despised the law was tangled in a legal net, denied even the boom of swift, uncomplicated death. Now and then there would be papers he would have to sign on his own behalf; invariably he would refuse to sign them, and there would begin a campaign of diplomacy. Visits from his wife, carrying the newly-born infant, surely a reason to make a fight for freedom! Visits from committees of this "gruppo" and that, bringing messages and resolutions, a newspaper article, a cablegram from Italy. You could never tell what odd circumstance might turn the trick with Sacco: a bouquet of flowers, a chat about what was to be planted in the garden this spring, or questions as to what would be blooming in Torremaggiore at this time of year—and suddenly the hard shell of anarchistic principle would melt, and the tormented man would smile, and stretch out his hand for the paper, saying, "Is crazy t'ing, but you say it, I sign heem".

Meantime typewriters were clicking, and circulars and pamphlets going out, and a scrap-book filling with clippings about the case. Throughout labor and radical circles in America Sacco and Vanzetti were becoming known as the latest victims of the "frame-up" system. Money was coming in, and several investigators were at work, and the busy brain of Lee Swenson was spinning counterplots like a nest of caterpillars in a pine tree. Under the law of the Commonwealth he had the right to a list of the witnesses to be used by the prosecution; and part of his preparation of the case was interviews with these persons, and efforts to get their stories from them, to break them down, to delve into their past and find out anything that would discredit them or frighten them, or cause them to swing over to the other side.

Under this system, a legal case became a miniature war, a contest of sappers and miners, of spies and counter-spies; some witnesses would sell out more than once, and change their stories back and forth—one statement to the Pinkerton detectives, a different one to the friends of the defense, yet another to the district attorney, another to the lawyers of the defense—and which one finally got to the jury was a matter of price or of psychology. Almost every witness wanted money, and then more money; but also every witness had a secret spring of loyalty or prejudice, which, if you could touch it, might turn the trick for a few days or forever. One would do anything to help a buddy who had been in France; one wanted to electrocute all Italians because he had been knifed by one in a street-fight twenty years ago; another abhorred Yankees because a school-teacher had beaten him as a child.

A singular education for a daughter of the blue-bloods, to help in a job lie this! Elizabeth Thornwell Alvin travelled into the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania, and was bumped for ten or fifteen miles in a buggy over country roads deep with the soft mud of early spring, and in a ramshackle farmhouse, with its paint peeled off and its fence-palings moulded and rotten, she met a girl who had been working in the Rice and Hutchins shoe-factory in South Braintree on the afternoon when the bandits had opened fire on the paymaster and the guard. This girl had a feeble chin and prematurely decayed teeth; her baby was due to make its entrance into a world of torment in a very few days. For some reason she got it into her weak head that Betty was there in the interest of the district attorney's office, and she became immediately hysterical, bursting into tears and shrieking that she was in no condition to come to a trial, and would not be forced to testify; anyhow, she knew nothing, because when the shooting had started, she had hidden under a bench.

Betty soothed her, assuring her there was no wish to force her to do anything; so presently the girl calmed down and became communicative. Too bad she could not go, because two of her former shop-mates were getting good pay to testify against those wops, and they sure ought to be run out of the country, coming in and taking honest people's jobs away, and fighting and all that, and it sure was up to we Americans to stand together against them. Later, by deft questioning, Betty drew from this patriotic young person the information that her mother had been an Irish peasant and her father a French peasant. A triumph of "Americanization", and the speeding-up

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processes of a machine age! Betty's ancestors, who had been tinners and carpenters and indentured servants, had taken three hundred years to acquire their superiority to the new immigrant workers; but here was a shoe-factory girl who had managed it in one-tenth of the time!

IX

The case of Mrs. De Falco was set for trial in a Boston police-court, and Betty and Joe turned their energies to this—digging into the records of public officials and running down clues of graft. Shudders ran up and down the spines of persons high in political power, and rage seethed in their hearts against blue-blood intruders who were not content with the security which wealth and prominence conferred, but turned traitor to their own privileges, and attacked the bases of law and order. What did these high-hat snobs want, anyhow? What was the matter with them that they could not be content with public officials who protected them, keeping them safe against bombers and blackmailers and burglars and pickpockets and a thousand such predatory creatures; making everything so comfortable that they might be born, grow up, live long, and go to pieces, like the one-horse shay, of old age and decrepitude, without ever knowing a moment of danger or making a real effort in their lives?

The politicians and police might laugh at the blue-bloods, but they respected and feared them, because of very real powers they still held; not merely finance, utilities, and the choicest real estate, but solidarity, knowledge, culture—the latter a far-off, mysterious thing, but awe-inspiring, like the power of a voodoo magician, who can cause your right arm to wither and fall off; or says he can, anyhow, and how shall you be certain about it? The lower orders, having captured the city, were afraid of their captives, and dared not make use of their power; they stood, fierce-eyed barbarians, at the doors of the temples, and watched the priests, clad in frock coats and high hats, performing mysterious offices, impossible to comprehend or imitate. In the end the barbarians capitulated and sent their sons to study in the temples, to become as much like the conquered caste as they could!

Politicians and police were used to many kinds of eccentricities on the part of rich persons. Those who had enormous powers and no duties necessarily had to work off steam. They even got used to the idea that now and then a rich eccentric would turn against his own and commit class-suicide. They knew that in the home of a dead poet in Cambridge, a shrine to which pilgrims travelled from all over America, the poet's grandson was upstairs entertaining syndicalists and communists and figuring the easiest way to overthrow the capitalist system. That was treason, but it was treason to the rich, and the rich were the ones to deal with it. What worried the politicians and police was when these young fools took to hounding the politicians and police. That was the treason that really mattered, that was a stab in the back, and the most dangerous activity one could pursue in America.

And here was Betty Alvin quite blandly going ahead, heedless of all warnings. So came a string of distressing developments. Anonymous letters, more abusive and more widely scattered; telephone calls, with sinister voices pronouncing dooms; visits to Rupert from his banking associates, who talked about alarming rumors they had heard; a call from the Republican boss with whom Rupert did business, and who asked him if he didn't have troubles enough! So again Betty was summoned to her father's home, and went through the worst scene so far; she lost her serenity, and shed many tears, but she would not go abroad, or give up either her lover or her anarchists. Again she was disinherited and disowned—whether in words, or actually upon paper, she had no way of knowing.

A heavy strain upon Rupert, and a strange freak of fate! Or could it be that there actually was some intelligence over-seeing the universe, and that Betty's revolt was a punishment visited upon a great banker who had left undone those things he ought to have done, and had done those things he ought not to have done? Rupert could not escape this idea, because he had been brought up in Trinity Church in the City of Boston, and had heard it—not exactly preached, but skirted on the edge of, every Sunday morning for fifty years. He would have liked to ask his rector, or some other clergyman: could there be a God perverse enough to object to Rupert's having taken the felt-plants of Jerry Walker, which Rupert could finance and Jerry couldn't? Could any God have

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wanted him to let the Boston Elevated stay on the rocks and be pounded to pieces? Could any God be so silly as the fanatics and agitators who denounced Rupert for having loaned money to legislators—when it was perfectly obvious that it was not Rupert who had elected these legislators, and that lending them money was the only way to get a raise of fares and make the stock of the Elevated worth anything? No, God was not going to punish the president of the Pilgrims National Bank for having protected the people who had trusted their fortunes to him! But then, how could God be letting Rupert's lovely young daughter be exposed to the furies of scandal at such a trying moment of her father's life?

X

One by one the members of the family received "poison pen" letters. Clara Thornwell Scatterbridge came to her mother, incredulous of the scandal, because her maternal soul had never desired an impropriety. Alice Thornwell Winters came, elegant and precious, regarding her virtue as a hard-won possession, deserving of commensurate rewards. No use expecting others to live up to one's own standards—"though I do think, Mother, Betty is beginning rather young. I must say I am aghast at this new generation, they don't even trouble to apologize for their indiscretions. And I don't know what to make of you, Mother—I thought you believed in the old standards. I heard that these radicals practiced free love, but somehow I didn't think of it in relation to my own mother".

"Well, Alice," said Cornelia, "you must consider my life. I was faithful to the old standards, I lived my life without love, and where did it get me?"

The carefully cultivated features of Alice Thornwell Winters wore a puzzled look. Alice prided herself upon being sensitive to all ethical and esthetic values—they were the same thing, she always insisted—beauty was truth and beauty was goodness—but of course beauty must be recognized by a discriminating intelligence—it was something that could not be explained—it was a gift, very rare, but Alice had it. "Really, Mother, how can you feel that you have had such a hard life? Your children love you, and your grandchildren would, if they saw more of you. Josiah was saying to me only yesterday, it was hard to understand why you found so much in Italian anarchists and so little in your own people."

"My dear, perhaps I know the Harvard values too well, and have got bored with them. Tell Josiah to come to dinner, and tell me what new things he has learned and accomplished. That is, unless you are afraid to expose him to my free love ideas."

That was a nasty stroke of a cat's claws, and the sensitive Alice winced. For everybody in the family had heard about the wild oats of "Young Josiah", only son of Alice and Henry—known as "Josie" to his boyhood playmates, and as "Si" to the members of the "Dickey" and the "Hasty Pudding Club". Alice allowed for him, because he was a man, and that was the way men did, apparently; they got over it in time, and settled down. But nowadays the girls were doing it too, and how would there be any esthetic standards, if the women did not maintain them? That was what shocked Alice in the episode of Betty and Joe—it was so unesthetic, to come to the apartment where Betty's grandmother lived! To which Cornelia answered that she had never been to a road-house, and could not judge, but it might be, of course, that some of them were fixed up esthetically. Look out for the cat's claws of this gentle-seeming old lady!

Alice went away, and Josiah Thornwell Winters called up, and made an appointment to dine with his grandmother to tell her what he had learned and accomplished as a Harvard senior. But when he came he did not mention the subject—because meantime the current of his thoughts had been diverted. The grandson and namesake of the stern old governor had fallen the newest victim to the calamities which were raining upon his family.

Cornelia happened to drop in at the office of the defense committee, and Lee Swenson gave her the first news of the event. "I don't like to repeat gossip, Nonna, but my guess is, your latest family trouble is a result of what you and Betty are doing, so you need to know about it."

"What do you mean, Lee?"

"There's a story all over town—last night the political gangs were roaring drunk in their bootleg-joints, and when they had a round of drinks, they would say, 'Have one on Young Josiah!' "

"What has he done?"

"They caught him in a hotel-room with a

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woman. Undoubtedly she lured him there—it's a regular system they have. They took a flashlight photograph of him, and Henry Cabot Winters paid seventy-five thousand dollars to kill the story."

Cornelia, the "Red", was supposed to be lacking in shame; but now she looked down, instead of at her friend. "Can it really be true, Lee?"

"It is what is being told. You can find out, of course."

"They can do that kind of thing in Boston, and not be punished?"

"It's the punishers who are doing it, Nonna. There is an aged millionaire in this town—perhaps you know him—old man Barbour?"

"I have met him."

"Well, they got him in the same kind of jam, and soaked him to the tune of three hundred and eighty-six thousand. You can hardly believe that, but I got the amount from one of his lawyers. And then young Searles—he inherited a fortune from his uncle, I think it was, and the gang got him in an apartment with a couple of girls and cleaned him out. Over in Middlesex they got a bunch of moving-picture people in a roadhouse for a wild party, and it cost those celebrities a hundred and five thousand."

"One might expect it of people like that," said Cornelia. "But it is something new for the Thornwells, unless I am mistaken. I'm glad that old Josiah is not here to see what has become of his name."

XI

So it was that when Josiah Thornwell Winters came to dinner two or three days afterwards, his grandmother did not chat about the polite nothings of the Harvard curriculum and the "Dickey" and the "Hasty Pudding Club". Throwing aside those reticences which are supposed to be the crown of womanhood, she talked in plain language about unspeakable things—"man to man", as she put it. And "Young Josiah", who had never dreamed of such a thing from an old lady, turned pink to the roots of his hair and looked as if he wanted to grab his hat and run; but after a while he got used to it, and found it a relief to talk about realities. He had come very close to shooting his head off, and neither the horrified grief of his pure mother nor the withering scorn his successful father had been of the slightest use to him.

He was twenty-two years old, and at the age of seventeen he had sprung up to the Thornwell height of six feet and more, but had never filled out his lean figure. His shoulders were stooped and his complexion pale, his fingers yellow with nicotine; but he had the most elegant Harvard drawl, and a complete equipment of skepticism and boredom applied to matters about which he knew nothing as well as to those about which Harvard had taught him everything. His manner was "right", his clothing had the proper shade of carelessness, and his apartment on the "Gold Coast" contained shelves of exquisite smut.

But now all that solemn pose of maturity had fallen like a cheap actor's cloak, and Cornelia confronted a raw, weedy youth with vicious habits and a sick sense of shame. "I'm a rotter," he said, "but I could tell you things to show you it wasn't entirely my fault. The Pater gave me the razz—he all but told me I'd oblige him if I'd eat a chunk of cyanide—and I said nothing. But you must know, Grandmother, he hasn't been any saint. It was my hard luck that I knew too much about both my father and my mother. Do you want me to talk about Mother?"

"I want you to tell me the truth."

"Well, Mother has wonderful emotions, but she's a little short on brains, and I rarely got anything useful from her. When I was about fifteen, I heard a terrible quarrel between her and the Pater; they each told all they knew about the other. I was behind a curtain, and had to stay there, because I was ashamed to let them know I'd heard the beginning. You know Mother's way, she has platonic thrills, but she doesn't go the limit, so that makes it all right. The Pater had got a story on her—her friends were talking about how she had travelled to New York with one of her poets, and had lain in his arms all night in the sleeping-car berth, but not parted with her virtue; that was her remarkable spirituality. The Pater called her some rotten names, and then she told what she knew about him, and that was my introduction to the subject of love. It wasn't exactly helpful, was it?"

Cornelia accepted the plea.

"Well, when I was sixteen, I was visiting a fellow from St. Mark's—it was a place on the North Shore, and he had an aunt—one of these up-to-date ladies who had divorced one husband and was getting rid of another, and her lover was in Europe, and she was

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bored. She came from New York, and they are ahead of us—but not more than a year or two, I have found—perhaps because they get the new shows a season earlier. Anyhow, this was good family, a country club crowd, no end of money, and it seemed all right. She came to my room at night—all fixed up, very beautiful and sweet-smelling, and what chance did a kid stand against that? You can't imagine how it is, Grandmother—I know it wasn't that way in your time. The women know what they want, and they just go to it."

"Are they trying to marry you?"

"Not often. Some have husbands, but they've been reading Freud, and have got the idea that all their troubles are repressions. And the young girls are worse."

"All of them, Josiah?"

"No, of course not—there are plenty of girls like Priscilla and Betty—I suppose they are straight. What happened to me was that I got a reputation, so I drew the wild ones. I was supposed to be a lady-killer. I don't imagine I'm abnormally attractive, but family counts for a lot, and Harvard, of course—the high-hat stuff. Anyhow, I assure you I never had to do any seducing, and I never made any promises I didn't keep. I've spent a lot of money, but always in respectable ways—I mean entertainments and presents and so on. I never got stuck for blackmail but this once."

Cornelia smiled. "You remember Æsop's fable," she said, "about the lioness who had only one cub, but that one was a lion."

XII

Young Josiah skirted around the cage of this "lion" for quite a while. It didn't seem really decent to tell such "dirt" to one's grandmother. But Cornelia pinned him down. "I have other grandchildren coming along, and I need to know about my city."

"Well, it's a rotten hole," said the youth. "I think this blackmail business is a result of the fact that Bostonians have to pretend to be so much better than they can be. Or maybe it's the Irish, bringing us Yankees off our high horses."

"Who was the woman?"

"She belongs to Larry Shay's gang. She looked like a society girl, and I really thought she was."

"Where did you meet her?"

"I had seen her around Harvard Square for a week or two, and I thought she lived in the neighborhood—a neglected young wife or something. She can't be over nineteen; she was dressed up to the minute, and looked like springtime. I suppose she was watching me, finding out about my habits. Anyhow, she passed me now and then, and always looked willing, but not too eager. This time I was sitting in my car, waiting for a fellow, and she came along smiling, and naturally I was smiling, and she walked up and said, 'You are Josiah Winters, aren't you?' She said, 'I know your cousin, Betty Alvin, but I'm not a "Red" like her, so don't be afraid of me'. She had got posted about Betty, and of course I thought Betty knew lots of people that the rest of the family wouldn't know. I laughed, and asked her if she'd like to ride, and she got in, and we rode all over, and I kissed her a few times, and she said she had never done anything like this before, and paid me a lot of compliments. But she wouldn't go to a roadhouse, and when we came back to town we had supper, and a little champagne, and —the upshot of it was, she knew a hotel where a girl-friend of hers lived, and she wouldn't be afraid to go there. So we went to a room; and about ten minutes after we got in, somebody put his shoulder to the door, and there were half a dozen men, and one of them held a camera, and another set off a flashlight. They said they were county detectives, and that I was under arrest, and the picture would be in the Boston *Telegram* the next afternoon. The girl went into hysterics—she was a good actress, I must say—or maybe she liked me and was sorry—I'm fool enough to wonder, because she was so young. But there it was, and the Pater pungled up seventy-five thousand bucks, and took it out by telling me what he really thought of me. It took quite a while, and he went into details."

Cornelia was moved to say, "You must allow for the financial strain".

"No, it is what he really thinks; he's been cherishing it up for a long time. He is disappointed in me; I'm a weakling, and he needs a strong man for his successor. He might stop and think, what has there been in my life to develop strength—assuming I had the possibility? When the Pater got through Harvard he had to pitch in and fight his own way; but I never had to, it was no good trying to fool myself with the idea that I was anything but a millionaire's son. Of course

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Mother's spoiling me was from affection, but that didn't change the result. I have enough of the Pater's brains to understand what happened. I never had to do anything but call somebody else. If the car was out of order, tell the chauffeur; if I wanted a bunch of flowers, tell the gardener. So many servants to wait on one kid; so many courtiers, to make you think you're the top of the heap—so why should you climb any higher? And then the women come, and after that it is impossible to break through. I don't mean merely sex—I mean all the things they want to do—tea-parties and dances and motoring and yachting. Honest truth, Grandmother, except for things like this blackmail, there's nothing to choose between the fashionable girls and the ones you pick up; they want to do the same things, and the only difference is where you go, and how much it costs. The one thing none of them will let you do is any serious work."

There was more to this revealing story, and Cornelia listened to it all and asked many questions. "I ought to have known these things many years ago," she said. "I might have helped you a great deal."

"Yes, of course. Nobody talks straight to us fellows. Mother doesn't know much that is real, and the Pater has been so busy making money—too busy to think what good it will do anybody. He must be pretty sick, because I show so few signs of solving the problem for him."

"Wouldn't you like to come see me now and then? Perhaps Betty and I could bring you in touch with people who are doing worthwhile things."

"Well, Grandmother, of course, I'll meet anybody you say, but I don't see much hope in that crowd of yours. The way it looks to me, you and Betty have got a little money and family position, and they are using you for what you are worth."

"Yes, my boy," said Cornelia, gently, "but I thought you might forget those Harvard ideas. I will take you to Charlestown prison and introduce you to one of my wops, who has never had either money or family position, and no education except what he picked up after washing dishes fourteen hours a day. He cannot express himself in English very well, yet he has managed to impress me as a very great man. It is possible he might impress you also, and make you realize what it means to men who lose the money that you get."

"I don't understand just what you mean by that," said Young Josiah from Harvard.

XIII

The trial of Mrs. De Falco came up in a Boston police-court, and Cornelia extended her knowledge of the "blackmail ring" and its power. A long-haired Swede from the West had come into Massachusetts to tell them how to run their system of justice; a "Red" and an enemy of society, who would not play the game as other lawyers played it, but tried to throw sticks into the machinery! Well, they would show him—and they did.

The magistrate was Irish, an ardent patrioteer, who needed no one to rouse his prejudice against anarchists, atheists, wops or Swedes. The lawyer representing the defendant was an aggressive and loud-mouthed Jew, and the way he and the judge collaborated was a prophecy of an immortal drama called "Abie's Irish Rose". When Felicani and Lopez, a Spanish anarchist, explained their conscientious objections to taking an oath, the devout Hebrew gentleman went after them hammer and tongs, and the devout Irish gentleman beamed with delight. After that it ceased to be the trial of an alleged bribe-seeker, and became the trial of two self-confessed free-thinkers. The judge actually ordered Lopez under arrest, and it took a lot of persuading to change his mind.

The two stenographers took the stand, and the fact that one of them had served with the A. E. F. in France did not help them in the least. Did they know the voice of Mrs. De Falco? If not, how could they be sure that the voice they had heard over the dictograph was her voice? To be sure, others had seen Mrs. De Falco talking in the room; but maybe these others were lying, maybe somebody had staged a performance to fool the stenographers and make them think they were listening to Mrs. De Falco when in reality they were listening to some other Italian woman offering a bribe proposition. Who could set a limit to the rascalities that atheists and anarchists might contrive, in order to discredit the legal system of the great Commonwealth of Massachusetts?

And then Mrs. De Falco herself, an alert and capable young woman, whose wits had been sharpened by years of battle for life in the police-courts. She sturdily denied every charge. To find the Italian woman guilty meant to find the great Commonwealth

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of Massachusetts guilty, and how could a patriotic judge do that? When the testimony about the officials began to come in, the judge ordered everybody out of the court-room except the witness and the counsel.

The defendant was acquitted; and Lee Swenson, feeling very blue, had gone off by himself, and sat down at a luncheon table in a restaurant—when who should come in but the aggressive Jewish lawyer! He was feeling good, naturally, and joined his victim at the table, and "kidded" him a bit, after the fashion of lawyers—and incidentally talked about the case, as one sensible man to another. Mrs. De Falco had hung around the courts for so many years; she had tried to capitalize her knowledge and get some money out of the Sacco-Vanzetti defense. She knew the details of other court-cases, enough to be able to make it appear that she was able to "swing" deals; she had gone to meeting-places with officials, to talk about other matters—knowing that she would be followed by the defense, who would thus conclude that she had a "pull".

Maybe so, said Lee; but it seemed to him a little strange that a lawyer should be saying such things about his client. Could it be that any of the officials were paying for this legal victory? The lawyer denied it, and Lee smiled his patient Swedish smile. Of course, you could never be sure; it might be that it had all happened as the other said; sometimes truth really was stranger than fiction. It might be that the officials had happened in while Mrs. De Falco was there, purely as a coincidence.

The judge had been of that opinion, and the case was history. The one thing Lee Swenson had accomplished—he realized it, now that it was too late—was to exacerbate the prosecution, to give to all officials having anything to do with the Sacco-Vanzetti case a reason for bitter and personal animus. The name of Lee Swenson became a by-word to all politicians and officials; the Sacco-Vanzetti Defense Committee became a nest of active and dangerous foes, and the task of sending two wops to the electric chair became one with the defense of every criminal-in-office in the entire community. Which was exactly as Vanzetti, lying through those endless hours in his prison-cell, had figured out and predicted. Always it happened, sooner or later, that everything turned out as Vanzetti had figured out and predicted!

CHAPTER TWELVE

Shadows Before

I

SPRINGTIME in New England! Not all the giant factories with belching smoke, not all the dingy tenements, billboards, hot-dog stands and filling-stations could conceal the fact that something magical was happening to the land. Even to prisoners in jail there was a difference in the air which crept through the corridors. Just as boys know when to fly kites with no outsider to remind them, so Nick Sacco knew it was time for the garden to be spaded, and he would ask who was going to do it and what was to be planted. It was good form to insist that he would be out in time to weed the garden, and to eat the first tomatoes.

And Vanzetti, who spent fifteen and a half hours in a cell with only a slit in the top for light, and worked in a yard blackened with coal-dust and smoke of nearby factories—even Bart knew that it was spring. You took a bunch of mayflowers when you went to see him, and the guard could not refuse to let you give him one. A pitiful thing, a frail blossom, but—"flower in the crannied wall"—it was a symbol, it meant a whole springtime; it meant those beautiful woods about Plymouth, and the walks which Bart had taken with Nonna and the children. "How happy we been, Nonna! We not know what happiness we have, till we los-èd him!"

He would talk about the things they had done and seen; it was all alive in his memory, it came like a vision, shining with a light that never was in any spring. He fed his soul upon such memories, lying through the long hours in his cage. Friendship, kindness, beauty—he had had these "blassings" in his life; not a full share—but then, he had observed that people who had a full share did not appreciate so much their "blassings". "Plenty people go in sunshine; they not think. But I got little time for seeing, I make notice!" He would move nearer to the window.

Betty had occasion to go to Plymouth, and she brought back Beltrando Brini in her car with her. Another kind of springtime, a musical talent putting forth buds! The little boy came to the prison, and after Cornelia had interceded with the warden he was

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brought into the big reception room, and unlimbered his fiddle and tuned it up. Bart sat watching every move, bursting with pride, as if he were the child's mother. Trando was scared, of course, for he was only thirteen and a half, and this was a terrible place, slouchy gray figures gliding here and there, watchers with hard faces and eyes. But he tucked the fiddle under his chin, and quavering notes stole on the air—"When you and I were young, Maggie"—the tune which Bart had heard him struggling to play, back in those happy days at home!

He had learned other tunes now—"Old Black Joe", and "Home, Sweet Home". Bart sat with tears running down his cheeks, no use trying to hide them. The convicts stole to the doors of their cells and strained their ears; even the hard-faced keepers listened, and were reminded suddenly that they too were in jail, victims of the hatreds they themselves engendered. All the prison drew together, realizing its shame; the steel bars were melted—and the harder and tougher moods which had made the steel. Oh, Man, how strange a fate—to make jails for yourself, and be led out by a little child with a magic wand—and then find yourself afraid, and obliged to run back and shut yourself in! A clock struck; visitors must leave, and magic cease!

II

Such holidays of the spirit were rare in the life of Cornelia and Betty these days. For the most part their talk was about harsh reality. The trial loomed near. A lawyer had come from the wild west and opened an office and started a propaganda campaign, slandering the good name of Massachusetts all over the world. He was raising tens of thousands of dollars—no one could say how much, but they guessed high and every dollar was a separate outrage and insult, a refusal to play the game according to the rules.

Lee Swenson knew the danger into which he had put his clients by the De Falco procedure, and this thought was a goad which gave him no rest. He was a cyclone of energy; writing circulars, or suggesting ideas for others to write; printing appeals, getting lists for mailing, writing to this person and that to get information, to pull wires for publicity, money, or support; interviewing witnesses, hunting up new ones, probing this or that detail of their lives. He would come out to dine with Cornelia, and sit in her big Morris chair by the window, fanning himself and sighing with exhaustion. But in a few minutes he would be telling about a new idea, and before long something else would pop into his head; out would come his notebook, and what was supposed to be a memorandum might turn into a new set of campaign plans.

Another lawyer had come, a friend of Swenson's from the west; Fred Moore, an Irishman, but a radical, and Swenson's aide in many a fight, also. There were two more journalists on the staff now, John Nicholas Beffel and Eugene Lyons, devoted young fellows, passionately convinced of the justice of the cause, and writing newspaper and magazine stuff that went all over the world. As an investigator, there was Bob Reid, a Boston constable, gray old veteran who had been through the Ettor-Giovannitti case with Swenson and could follow the trail of the authorities like an Indian-hunter. If there was anything about Massachusetts police-practice too dreadful for Cornelia to believe, all she had to do was to ask this man and he would cauterize her doubts.

And then another figure, still more alarming to a lady who had lived a sheltered life; a figure out of the underworld, furtive-eyed, silent—a man whom Swenson or Moore usually saw alone, and with whom they made mysterious appointments. Lee, it appeared, was going to try the "stool pigeon" methods of the authorities. Somebody had actually committed the South Braintree crime, he insisted, and the Bridgewater one too; the way to nail down the prosecution was to find the guilty men. A rumor had come to Lee that in the near-by city of Providence, Rhode Island, there was a gang of real bandits who were driving an automobile which they called, jeeringly, "Sacco's car". Now the lawyers were spending money to trail this gang, and Cornelia began to hear whispers of dread names.

Lee Swenson saw himself playing the "lead" in a fifth act, in which the prosecution would be confronted with the real evidence, so overwhelming that truth would be vindicated and justice done.

Lee was much of a boy, in spite of his forty years, and he managed to communicate this excitement to Betty and Joe and Cornelia. But he found it impossible to get the Italians of the committee to share his idea;

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as in the De Falco case, it was contrary to "filosophia anarchica". When you argued about it, you would meet shrugs of the shoulders; let the cops do their own dirty work. "We no raise money for sooch job." When you declared that here might be real bandits, there would be a still higher shrug of the shoulders, a wider sweep of the hands. "What if they were? Is poor feller, musta live. Is victim of wicked sistema, what right I got for punish?"

And when you took the question to Bart and Nick, you met exactly the same response. They would not be saved at the expense of any other human being; they would not compromise their principles, even to prove their innocence. The business of anarchists was to end the system of exploitation, after which crime would cease of itself. If you could live according to these principles, all right, then live; but if you could not, then it was up to you to die. Such stubbornness was embarrassing to persons of Yankee upbringing who believed in adjusting means to ends, and took "law and order" seriously. Also embarrassing to a lawyer who had spent twenty years training himself to play a certain game, and now was expected to play it and not play it at the same time!

III

Day by day, as the work continued, the intricacies of the case developed. The list of the witnesses for the prosecution numbered more than fifty, those for the defense close to one hundred. There were not investigators enough to run down all the clues, there were not cells enough in the human brain to hold all the details. The crime had occurred in mid-afternoon on a busy street, and there were many witnesses, each one a separate problem; the more you dug into it the more problems you would discover—husbands, wives, sweethearts, children, employers—to say nothing of policemen and investigators and prosecuting officials who had been there before you! The witnesses were mostly persons of low social station, the neglected poor of America. To probe into their lives, to uncover their family skeletons, their vices and secret shames, their greeds and fears and vanities and hates—it seemed to Cornelia there was nothing so horrible in all the world.

Take the soul of Lola Andrews. Cornelia lived with the soul of Lola Andrews for months, walked, talked, ate, slept, dined or fasted with Lola Andrews; because Betty took Lola for her task, consecrating her youth and beauty, her charm, her faith, hope and charity, to the task of trying to persuade Lola to tell the truth. Naturally Betty, being new at the practice of of psychopathology, and not very well informed as to the diagnosis and treatment of hysteria, paranoia, nymphomania, and other abnormalities, would bring her problems to Cornelia. The two would hold long consultations, and Cornelia would visit the famous Dr. Morrow and ask his advice.

Lola Andrews had begun life in the wilderness of Maine, as the bastard child of an Italian man and a Yankee farmer's daughter. Her mother died, her father disappeared, and she grew up, slim and small, black of eyes and hair, a kind of woodland sprite, used to the sneers of the world. At the age of seventeen she was married. Her husband was a soldier returned from the Philippines, and he drank and left his wife at home; after a child was born, Lola began running out to dances, and first he beat her, and then left her. Durng years of misery she made the discovery that by screaming and crying she could get people to pay attention to her; so she became a hysteric, and at any time during the investigation or trial if anything happened that Lola didn't like, up would go her hands and forth would come a shriek.

At the time of the South Braintree crime Lola had been taking care of an elderly man who was bedridden, in the hope that he would leave her a part of his property at his death. Meantime, since he gave her nothing, she scrubbed floors, she went out and did washing —and of course was preyed upon by men. The police of the town knew about her life, yet they let her stay on, and in a case like this made use of her.

It was Lola's story that she had been walking down the street, four hours before the crime, and had twice passed what she thought was the bandit-car. It was a great weakness of the prosecution that the crime had taken place at such speed that there had been only a minute or so for observation; but here was Lola, who had stopped and chatted with the bandits! One of the two men standing by the car was yellow-haired—and when Joe Randall heard this part of the story he said, "Look out, Lee Swenson, they are after you!" The other man had been under the car, doing something to the works, and this

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was the one Lola had made a special point of observing, and was willing to describe in any way that seemed most to the advantage of Lola.

So here was a problem in applied psychology; to explore the dark caverns of this tortured soul, to know more about her than she knew about herself, so that you could pull the strings and manipulate her to the ends of justice. But alas, it was easier to dream than to accomplish; the science of psychopathology is still in its infancy, and the few months' time allowed was insufficient to bring it to maturity. Lola would have moods of frankness. She was nearing forty now, her charms were gone; she was a poor wreck, and this was her chance to get what was coming to her; the world was a place of "dog eat dog", and why should she worry about a pair of wops who would never worry about her? Why should she worry about what she had said at preliminary hearings, or to newspaper reporters, or investigators, or any of the other people who had pestered her? All she had to do was deny it; the district attorney would protect her and the jury would believe her.

There was a secret spring by which the soul of Lola might be moved, but, alas, the defense did not find it until after the trial. The fates so willed it that everything that was really significant in the Sacco-Vanzetti case was not found until after the trial. Lola's son was living up in Maine, under another name, and in the effort to keep his esteem she would make sacrifices—for a few days. When confronted with this son, and his reminder of other cases where she had "staged a show", Lola broke down and admitted that she had lied, and that her identification had been "framed". She made affidavit to this in the presence of her son and several reliable witnesses. But under police pressure, she took it all back, and made another affidavit, with a lurid tale about how the defense had intimidated her. Subsequently she took that back, also.

Such was Lola Andrews, who sat in the witness-chair at the trial, and identified Sacco as the "dark-complexioned man" who had been under the car, and identified the car as the bandit-car because, "when I heard of the shooting I somehow associated the man I saw at the car". And when the defense started to question her about her past life, she suddenly threw her celebrated fainting stunt, and Judge Thayer hastened to adjourn court. When she was asked the cause of her excitement, she said it was because she had recognized in the court-room a man who had assaulted her in Quincy! And Judge Thayer, who had no more training in psychopathology than Cornelia and Betty, ordered all the doors of the courtroom closed, while the officers attempted to catch the man whom Lola had recognized. Never had she had so much attention, never had she been such a heroine!

Then came Mrs. Campbell, the elderly woman who had been with Lola on the day of the crime, and had gone into the shoe-factory with her to seek a job. It took fancy detective work to locate Mrs. Campbell, because she was not listed by the prosecution; when she was found, the reason was apparent—she completely wiped Lola out. The man they had spoken to was not the man under the car at all, but a man in khaki clothes standing near the factory; neither of them had spoken to any man who was working on an automobile. An investigator for the government had come to Mrs. Campbell, and, hearing her story, had assured her there was no need for her to come to Dedham to testify, what she knew was of no importance and it would cost too much money to bring her. The great, rich Commonwealth of Massachusetts was spending seventy thousand dollars to put two wops out of the way, and had not ten dollars left for the truth.

What could you make of a world in which you studied Lola Andrews for months, and came to know every quirk of her fantastic soul; in which you saw her exposed and discredited by witness after witness—even a policeman and a newspaper reporter to whom she had admitted that she did not see the faces of the men she thought were the bandits; and then, in the face of all this, you saw the Honorable Fred Katzmann, district attorney of Norfolk County, stand up to address the jury, and with most solemn asseverations of sincerity, declare: "I have been in this office, gentlemen, for now more than eleven years. I cannot recall in that too long service for the Commonwealth that ever before I have laid eye or given ear to so convincing a witness as Lola Andrews"!

IV

And then Carlos Goodridge! This man, the manager of a small music-store, had happened to be in a pool-room near the scene of

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the crime. There were four other men in the room, and none of them had got a glimpse of the bandits, and to these others Goodridge had admitted that he could not identify the bandits. "If I have got to say who the man was, I can't say." But seven months later Goodridge and his wife were in court, charged with stealing several hundred dollars of money and goods from the music-store. It so happened that Sacco was there at the same time, pleading to some motion, and Goodridge saw his opportunity, and told the authorities that he recognized Sacco and could identify him as one of the South Braintree bandits. A deal was made by which the case against Goodridge was "placed on file" —that is to say, he would not have to serve the sentence for his crime, provided he would take the witness-stand and swear away the life of another man.

And here was Lee Swenson, insisting to Cornelia and Betty and Joe that the prosecution would be able to "get away" with that! Judge Thayer would find some way to bar all testimony to the effect that Goodridge had a sentence hanging over him; he would send the jurors from the room while the matter was argued, so they would never know they were listening to a criminal. Something else must be got on that fellow! Lee's instinct, what he called his "smell for crime", told him that Goodridge had been in jail. But where? And how to prove it?

It was a matter to which Lee hung on with bull-dog grip; they must follow this clue and that, they must get more investigators, spend more money. But they had only a few weeks and the right clue came too late! After the trial they knew all about Carlos Goodridge—his real name was Erastus Corning Whitney, which in itself meant that he had committed perjury when he testified against Sacco. He had served terms in Elmira Reformatory and in Auburn State Prison, New York, and was now wanted in that state for grand larceny. He had had a number of wives, and Swenson collected a string of affidavits from these ladies, setting forth his habits of marrying under various names, of stealing everything in sight and of lying freely. One added that he had been attacked by Italians whom he had cheated of their belongings, and had borne a grudge against Italians ever since.

Too late! Too late! The curse that lay upon the Sacco-Vanzetti case: that everything came too late! When the only thing you could do was to make another motion before Webster Thayer, and have that just and upright judge respond, "Motion denied!" Lee Swenson and one of his men tracked "Goodridge" to the little village of Vassalboro, Maine, confronted him with his record, and he held out his wrists for the handcuffs. Later they had him arrested, but—strange solidarity of the rulers of America—New York State did not want him now, could not be persuaded to take him! When once a criminal has obliged the police in any part of the country, he is immune.

And stranger yet, the august judiciary will rally to his defense and not permit him to be slandered by having his criminal record exposed! Webster Thayer, a Daniel come to judgment, would hand down his decision on the motion for a new trial, rebuking the defense for his pursuit of Goodridge, and saying that he had done right to resist a lawyer's efforts to intimidate him. "Motion denied!"

V

Too late! Too late! Several times, in the midst of investigations for South Braintree, they turned up evidence concerning the earlier case. Evidence which would have saved poor Bart, if only it could have been got to the jury! New witnesses—Yankee witnesses—who had seen the Bridgewater shooting, and declared that the bandits did not look like Vanzetti! Witnesses who had stated this to the police, and had been told to go home and keep quiet! Now this case was legally dead; Vanzetti's friends could not even have the poor satisfaction of bringing the new evidence to the attention of Judge Thayer. No matter what happened at the coming trial, Bart would stay in Charlestown prison fourteen more years—save in the unlikely event that Massachusetts might elect a governor with a heart.

So now Cornelia heard those ghostly voices which on past occasions had shouted to her in vain! If only she had waited until that family which was away from home had come back! If only she had turned up this street instead of that! And of course these vain regrets brought terrors for the future; they began to hear, far-off and faint, the ghostly voices warning them about the new case. They were like enchanted people in an old-time legend, living half-way between two worlds, holding communion with both. Lee

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Swenson, sitting in Cornelia's big chair, with his chin in his hand and his heavy brows knitted in thought, became some medieval magician, wrestling with spirits and demons he challenged but could not command.

"Creature of Flame, thou shalt not daunt me!
'Tis I! 'Tis Faust! Thy peer I vaunt me!"

Many things this new Faustus demanded of the "busy spirit that ranges round the world". Find the man with a bullet-hole in his overcoat! Again and again this clue turned up; there had been a man by the name of Roy Gould, who had been fired upon by the bandits, and the bullet had pierced his coat. But nobody knew this man's address. Manifestly, the police would not have overlooked such a witness; and the fact that he was not listed by them meant that he had failed to identify Sacco and Vanzetti. Presently it was learned that he was a salesman of shaving-paste; someone reported that he was in the habit of selling his wares to crowds at circuses and fairs, so it was a question of getting a list of all the circuses in New England!

Like all others, this mystery was solved too late. The man turned up, several months after the trial. The bandits had passed within five or ten feet of him, and the one who was supposed to be Sacco had fired at him, and he said it could not possibly be Sacco. He would go down into history as the "Gould motion"; one of thirteen different appeals for a new trial, which would compel Judge Thayer to repeat thirteen times his celebrated formula, "Motion denied".

Also the witnesses who were to refute Louis Pelzer, a shoe-cutter and half-wit who had been in the Rice and Hutchins factory when the shots were fired, had run to the window, and then dropped down out of sight. He had really seen nothing, but deep in the soul of this Jewish boy was an abject awe of authority, the buried memories of a hundred pogroms, when his ancestors had cowered in ghetto tenements and seen whole families brained before their eyes. When a blue uniform appeared in the room, when a prosecuting official frowned upon him, something inside Louis Pelzer gave way.

So he was going to say that one of the bandits was the "dead image" of Sacco; he would learn this phrase, and repeat it as often as desired. And where were the witnesses to break him? Three of them, fellow-workers, would be found by the defense; but the most important of them would be found too late. Four months after the trial, Louis was to make an affidavit, declaring that his testimony was false. Six months after that, he was to take it all back, and be safe with the police again!

But most loudly the ghostly voices shouted about the Pinkerton reports. The operative "H. H." had been on the scene immediately after the crime, and his reports wiped out the most important of all the witnesses of the prosecution, Mary Splaine. Not merely had she identified other men, but she had told stories to the Pinkerton operative which in themselves discredited her. And all this was known to the prosecution—but not a hint of it to the defense! Most amazing circumstance of all—that Pinkerton operative was going to attend the trial, and take the stand and testify against a defense witness! Henry Hellyer would sit and listen to Mary Splaine swearing away the life of Sacco, knowing what this woman had told him, and what he had written and turned in to his employers! The mockery of it—the devilishness of it—that prosecuting authorities would play such a trick! And the ghostly voices would shout into the ears of Cornelia and Betty and Joe, and no one of them would hear a sound! Lee Swenson might sit with his chin in his hand, and bend his brows and torture his wits all night—but the "busy spirit that ranges round the world" could never be conjured to give him a hint of that secret!

VI

There was a fatality hanging over Cornelia. She had seen it coming—no way to stop it, yet she had pushed the thought away and refused to face it. But now the trial was only a week off, and there could be no more evasion. Lee Swenson telephoned, asking if he might come to dinner that evening; he wanted to be alone with her, he said—and she knew the time had come.

Lee looked very tired; there were deep lines about his mouth, and deep shadows under his eyes, and he hardly tasted his very good dinner. For a while Cornelia managed to divert him—asking for the news. A curious development in the case, ready-made for a detective romance: from a scrubwoman whom he had befriended, Lee had found out that the police had hired the janitor of his tumble-down office-building to deliver the

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contents of his trash-basket every night! He knew that they had their minds fixed upon the sixteen thousand dollars which they thought Sacco had buried; so the lawyer would divert his tired mind by drawing maps of buried treasure! He made a plot of Sacco's garden: sixteen feet north from the southwest corner, twenty-two feet east—then dig! The next time Cornelia went to Stoughton, she must find out if anybody had done so!

Dinner was over, and the maid dismissed, and the doors closed; the clouds came back to the lawyer's face. "Nonna," he said, "we are going to lose these boys!"

"Oh, Lee!" Cornelia's voice almost failed her.

"They've got us sewed up in a strait-jacket."

"Why do you think that?"

"Do you realize what lies ahead for this trial? We start on the day after Memorial Day, and then comes the anniversary of Belleau Wood, and then Bunker Hill Day, and before we get through it will be the Fourth of July! And all these dead soldier-boys they are bringing home, all the weeping and praying and dedicating our lives to our country!"

"What has that got to do with it?"

"You ask me seriously? This is going to be the great peace-time service for heroes to render to the nation; a defense of our heritage against foreign anarchy and Bolshevism. And what have we got? Very few Yankee witnesses! A string of wops—worse than at Vanzetti's trial!"

The lawyer began to count on his fingers—the scores of witnesses he had been able to find. On the day of the South Braintree crime, Bart had been selling fish, and digging clams and bait in Plymouth, and had met few Yankees. He had stopped and chatted with one Yankee fisherman—but the jury would say this fellow had got mixed up on the date. Bart had bought some cloth from a Yiddish peddler, of whom Katzmann would make a monkey. For the rest, they would have to depend upon Alfonsina and Lefevre Brini, and Antonio Carbone and Angelo Giadabone—hardly the sort of names to impress a Yankee jury!

As for Nick, he had been in Boston that day, and had talked to one American—but didn't know him! He had had lunch with Guadagni at Boni's restaurant, and later there had been two other Italians present; he had paid some money to an Italian grocer, and then gone to the consulate, to get his passport—but the man who had waited on him there had gone back to Italy, and all they had was a deposition, not very convincing to a jury.

So much for the alibis. And then for the identifications; what perversity of fate that so many of them depended upon wops! Why did it have to be that Goodridge had been working for an Italian at the time of the crime, and that his former employer was also an Italian? And the men in the pool-room, to whom Goodridge had declared that he could not recognize the bandits! Such names as Magazu, Arrigoni, Mangoni, D'Amato! And then a bunch of men who had been working on a trench in the street when the bandit-car passed; a whole gang who would testify that they had seen the bandits in the car, and that none of them resembled Sacco or Vanzetti. But what good would it do? "It's just no use to put on a string of Italians, Nonna—three are better than thirty, because you bore the jury and get them cross. Fred Katzmann will make some playful remark—'What is this, a Columbus Day parade?'—and after that the jury will never stop smiling."

There was a long silence. "Remember, Nonna, this means death for both of them. There is no middle ground."

"I know it, Lee."

"And if we don't win the verdict, don't fool yourself about the future. Remember, so long as Web Thayer lives, he stays the boss of this case; the Supreme Court of Massachusetts has never yet reversed a verdict in a capital case, and you may be sure it won't begin with anarchist wops. So it's now or never."

"I know, Lee." Cornelia's voice was faint.

Again a silence. The lawyer's look was fixed upon her, and she could not meet it.

"Do you really want to save those boys, Nonna?"

"Of course I do!"

"Then why don't you do it? Why not testify for them?"

"You told me you couldn't use character witnesses."

"I don't mean that sort of witness, Nonna. I mean, why don't you let me fix you up a story, about how you went down to Plymouth on April fifteenth of last year, spent the day with the Brinis, and had lunch with Bart, and later walked on the beach and saw him

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digging clams? That's the way to win this case, Nonna; it will end right there—a knockout!"

VII

What was it—some instinct buried deep in Cornelia Thornwell, something in the very fibre of her being—that made it necessary for her to be shocked by these words, even though the idea had been haunting her mind for months? Nothing really new that Lee Swenson could say to her—yet she had to let him say it, and act as if she had never thought of it! "Oh, Lee, I couldn't do it!"

"Why couldn't you? Did you really never tell a lie?"

"Never one like that!"

"Little ones, Nonna, for little occasions. But this is a big occasion! This is life or death!"

Again a pause. When the lawyer resumed, his voice was grim, and he dropped the playful nickname. "I am not going to try to put pressure on you, Mrs. Thornwell, as I have on other witnesses in my life; for after all, it is your case—Bart is your friend, far more than he is mine, and why should I want to save him more than you?"

"Don't put it that way, Lee!"

"But that is the way to put it! You have your friends, and you have your principles; you must weigh them, and decide which you value more. We all have to make such choices—Bart made one, you remember: he lied for his friends. Those lies he told in the police-station were to save Boda and Orciani from sharing the fate of Salsedo. He will tell a different story on the witness-stand, and whether it is the truth or not—judge for yourself!"

Another pause. "What is it, Mrs. Thornwell? Have you religious scruples about an oath? Do you believe God will blast you to eternity if you save these boys from the electric chair?"

"No, it isn't that."

"Is it patriotism? Do you think it will help your country to let a bunch of crooks kill a pair of idealists, as a means of frightening the others?"

"No, not that."

"Then it's just a matter of good form? It's that you are a lady, and such things are not done!"

"No, not that, either. As a matter of fact, they are done all the time. My brothers-in-law are lying in business, and they will lie on the stand to back each other up."

"Exactly!" And to himself Lee Swenson thought, "She has been debating it with herself!" Aloud he said, "What is it, Mrs. Thornwell?"

"It is just—I wouldn't know how to do it!"

"But if that is all that troubles you, here's a thoroughly qualified expert to take charge. Put yourself in my hands, as if it were a surgical operation, and I'll guarantee we'll have Nick on the street before the Fourth of July, and we'll start a move to get Bart pardoned!"

"But Lee, how could I do such a thing?"

"If you mean it as a technical question, nothing more simple: you take the stand and swear that you were in Plymouth that day, and you recite the details of some other day when you were actually there. It can all be worked out, very easily. You were in the habit of going there off and on, nobody can dispute that. You remember the date, because of something that happened the day before or the day after. Perhaps there was a concert you had just been to, or there was to be one, and you had to leave in order to attend it. We can go back and find a public event to tie to; or perhaps you have a diary, or some letters."

"But suppose I did something in Boston on that day?"

"There'll be a way to get round it. You understand that, according to your story, you only had to remember back three weeks. As soon as you heard Bart was arrested, you naturally looked back and realized that you had been with him the day of the crime. But anybody who is going to refute you has got to begin now, and remember back a year—which isn't apt to happen. If they have documentary evidence, like a letter—well, the trial will be over a day or two after you testify. There might be a scandal among your friends, but nothing serious, and anyhow the boys will be free—you understand that when a jury has acquitted them, they can't be tried for South Braintree again."

VIII

Lee kept his promise not to put pressure on her. What he did was to go over the case, telling what each government witness would testify, and just how that testimony had been "made". As a piece of prophecy it was a

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miracle, but Lee claimed no occult powers. With bitterness he said "If I want to know what the other side is doing, I figure what I would do myself".

He had talked with some of these witnesses; others, who had refused to talk to him, had become the subject of "reports". So he knew their motives, and how they would be controlled. When there was need of "rough-stuff", the police would attend to it. The more subtle work would be done by college-bred gentlemen of the district attorney's office, who had learned to manufacture in weaker minds like Mary Splaine and Frances Devlin what the psychologists term a "false memory". They would take these women to the jail again and again and show them Sacco and Vanzetti; they would present pictures of Sacco and Vanzetti, insisting that these were the bandits, these were the men whom the women had seen in the bandit-car; until in the women's minds the prison memories, the photograph memories, became superimposed upon the bandit memories, so completely merged with them that they could no longer be separated.

There were a thousand tricks that successful prosecuting officials knew. They stood in with the political ring, they could promise favors—contracts and business, a job for a man who needed it, immunity from trouble with the police. "I am a friend of Mr. Jones, in the district attorney's office"—such a statement would tear up an auto-tag, or suppress a liquor-charge any day. "It is what we call power," said Lee Swenson, "and those who hold it know how to use it."

Like Virgil, leading Dante through successive stages of the infernal regions, Lee Swenson conducted the widow of Governor Thornwell into the interior of the Boston "ring". He knew the way, because in the Ettor-Giovannitti case he had had these forces to deal with. Indeed, the factional quarrels in the political gang had been such that one side had betrayed the other, and Lee had seen documents that would have entitled leading statemen to spend the rest of their days in Charlestown prison. When you had listened to his stories for an hour or two you understood Lola Andrews's statement that it was "dog eat dog"; you forgot the Emersonian notion of making truth count in Boston!

Cornelia, probing her own soul, confessed to a certain snobbery in her attitude towards perjury. It was a thing she associated with foreigners accused of crime, and with Irish politicians. The City Hall belonged to the Irish; but the State House with its golden dome was run by gentlemen, and was a sacred spot. But Lee Swenson declared there was ten times as much graft in the State House—the only difference was that it was legalized; such things as fixing up laws to enable great corporations to plunder the public. There under the golden dome you would encounter a banker who wanted his attorney made into a Supreme Court judge, so that the banker would be safe forever after; or a state bank-commissioner who wanted to become president of a bank; a great lawyer who wanted to use his inside knowledge of politics to plunder the clients of banks; a financier who wanted to buy legislators, to increase the value of certain public utilities.

Cornelia understood all these references; Lee Swenson was attacking the Thornwell family, undermining its claims to moral superiority. He was pointing to scandals in which her family was involved—some that were in the public prints, others that were whispered in the gossip of the clubs. And she knew it was all true; she knew that Rupert Alvin and Henry Cabot Winters and John Quincy Thornwell were busy right now framing up their perjury in the Jerry Walker case. When an I. W. W. lawyer referred to the matter, she did not rebuke him. She did not even protect her family dignity when he mentioned that her son-in-law had begun his legal career as counsel for the Boston Elevated Railway, which meant that he had done most kinds of dirty work known to the legal profession.

"Believe me, Nonna, I can tell you," said the man from the wild west. "I began with the Great Northern Railroad, and spent my time gypping poor workers out of damages. I was paid five hundred a month, very nice for a young fellow, and I had the way clear before me, right up to the top, maybe a seat on the Supreme Court bench—that is how you get there. But it made me sick; I couldn't forget the faces of the men I had robbed, and their pitiful wives and children. I just couldn't look at myself in the mirror. So I threw up the job, and went in to try to help the workers; and what I saw—well, I have a simple formula, Nonna, I don't care what a man has done in the labor cause, he can never be so guilty as those who take dividends of his sweat and blood."

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Said Cornelia: "Henry has talked to me a lot about the Sacco-Vanzetti case, trying to drag me out of it. The next time he broaches it, I'll ask him about some of these matters".

At which the other smiled. "Well, get it straight. Don't ask if he pays bribes to witnesses; don't ask if he 'frames' them. Everything is done very carefully and decorously, in the office of a great Boston lawyer. When a witness comes in he doesn't see the chief, he sees a young subordinate. The witness says, 'I saw the man and he was wearing a blue hat'. The young lawyer interrupts him, 'Oh, surely you are mistaken, we have information that the man was wearing a red hat. Think it over and see if you weren't mistaken'. He sends the witness away, and next day the witness comes back, and meets another subordinate, and says, 'I saw this man and he was wearing a red hat'. 'That is right,' says the young lawyer. 'And he was walking,' says the witness, 'rather slowly'. 'Oh, surely you are mistaken,' says the lawyer, 'we understand he was running at top speed. Think it over and see if you don't realize that that is how it was.' So the witness goes away, and next time he comes he meets a third subordinate, and he says, 'I saw this man, and he had a red hat on, and he was running very, very fast'—and so on, until he knows exactly what happened. So then he meets the chief, and tells the chief what he saw, and the chief says, 'That is a very good witness, a dependable person'. When he presents the witness to the jury, he assures the jury this is a dependable person, and no one can possibly say the great and famous lawyer ever did a dishonorable action."

IX

"Lee, I just *couldn't* do it!"—those were Cornelia's parting words. He answered, "Think about it"—knowing well that she would think about nothing else. Cowardice, weakness, false pride—she was willing to call it any bad name, but there was something in her that stopped dead when she tried to think of going upon the witness-stand and swearing to a made-up story. How could truth ever exist in the world, if somebody did not stand by it?

Vanzetti came, as usual, to keep the midnight watch with her. "I am poor wop," said he. "But what you say if it was a Thornwell?" Cornelia's fancy played with that theme. She saw her daughter Alice, as in one of those ferocious quarrels which had marked the early stages of her marital disharmony, with jealousy gnawing her heart, she had bought a revolver and shot Henry, and so was on trial, in danger of the electric chair. But no, it was absurd, the electric chair was not for Thornwells, there could be no such issue; they would adjudge Alice insane, and put her in a sanitarium, take a year or two to "cure" her, and then let her loose. But suppose, for the sake of argument, Alice was in danger, and Cornelia had to take the witness-stand. If she told the truth her daughter would be executed, and if she lied her daughter would go free. Which would she do?

Right was right, and wrong was wrong, people said, and it sounded simple. But when you met a concrete case, you discovered that you could not live by formulas. To refuse to do a lesser wrong, and thereby do a greater—was that moral? On the other hand, if you said that the end justified the means, where would you stop? Every man would be a law to himself, and there would be chaos instead of order. There must be rules, something men could count on. But the moment you said that, you had a system, with Judge Thayer sitting on top, sentencing men to death for the convenience of the Boston aristocracy.

The cruelty of the dilemma lay here, that what was supposed to be justice was really class-greed. Bart and Nick were not going to be tried because they had held up a pay-roll; they were going to be tried because they were dangerous leaders of social revolt. That would be the real motive-power behind prosecutor, judge and jury; that would be the thought in the minds of every one of them, at every stage of the trial. The rest would be pretence, a cloak of propriety. And that was the real lie—the real perjury: Fred Katzmann's genial smile, veiling a sneer; Web Thayer's cold dignity, with a wink now and then to the jury. When Cornelia remembered what she had seen in the Plymouth court-room, it seemed to her that God would surely forgive any lies that served to thwart such knavery!

So she swung back and forth, from one point of view to the other, never satisfied with either. Lee Swenson said no more, but from that day his presence was a question. Bart's picture on the mantel-piece was a

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challenge—what was friendship worth? it seemed to demand. You were not asked to give your life for your friend, but only your ethical code; your exclusiveness, your idea that you were something special, apart from the harsh, rough world—in short that you were "Boston"!

From the first to last Betty never spoke about the matter; and that was surprising to Cornelia—it had the effect of putting her off by herself, as if in a museum, or a mausoleum. Betty and Joe were bound to have talked about the matter; everybody on the committee must have thought of it. "Mrs. Thornwell could save our boys, if she would!" Cornelia could hear Betty replying, "No use to put anything like that up to Grannie, she belongs to the old generation". Cornelia wondered if the new generation would take the liberty of lying when it pleased. The issue did not arise, because Betty and Joe had been in Europe, and could hardly invent a special trip back in order to be with Bart on the day of the South Braintree crime!

X

If Cornelia could not face the thought of perjury, neither could she face the alternative. When she thought of the electric chair, and Bart and Nick strapped into it—no, no, it was too horrible, it simply *could* not happen! So each skirmish in this war of conscience served to start Cornelia into new activity. In spite of aching back she would write more letters, in spite of tired limbs she would set forth to a committee-meeting, or to speak to a group of women, to assault the ears of the heedless and drag them away from a bridge-party to a murder-trial.

She had the idea now that she could help the cause by persuading a group of ladies of good family to go to Dedham and watch the proceedings. They would move to the town for a month, and invade the court-room in a phalanx, and sit like the "tricoteuses" of the French revolution, doing fancy-work! They might frighten "Web" Thayer into a semblance of impartiality, and possibly even restrain Fred Katzmann's crude wit at the expense of wops. The courts were supposed to be immune to outside influences, but Cornelia knew her Boston too well to believe that.

In one way or another, several women of social standing had become interested in the case. There was Mrs. Lois Rantoul, who was a Lowell, than which nothing could be more impressive in a court-room. And Mrs. Jessica Henderson, also wealthy—though she hurt her social position by getting arrested, along with Cornelia and Betty, the day President Wilson had been welcomed to Boston. Mrs. Henderson and her daughter Wilma had spent the night in that old Joy Street police-station.

And then Mrs. Evans, still earlier on the ground. Elizabeth Glendower Evans was the widow of a young lawyer who had died before he had ever had a case. She had been a charity-worker through youth and middle age. Now she was gray-haired—and what a relief to Cornelia to have some one else who was elderly and respectable, to help bear the brunt of criticism! Mrs. Evans had got her social awakening during the Lawrence strike of two years ago; she had gone, with others, to see fair play, and instead had seen an unresisting striker felled to earth by three husky policemen and shoved into a patrol-wagon like a dead dog. Next morning she saw this man, with head cut and plastered, arraigned for assault, and she arose and told the court what she had seen. Said His Honor: "Your testimony would be important if the police were under accusation"—and thereupon he sentenced all the strikers. Mrs. Evans spoke again, saying, "I go bail for all these prisoners"—which was very picturesque, and made a front-page story in the papers.

"Old Boston" again, you see! She was a stockholder in the Lawrence mills, which made it still more picturesque, and shocking to the mill-masters. To go to strike-headquarters and say to I. W. W. leaders, wops and dagoes and guineys and such riff-raff, "I don't know whether the wages you ask are reasonable, but I do know that you are persecuted by the authorities, and denied the legal rights to which you are entitled, and to that extent I am with you"—to say that was to become, in the columns of the press, leader of the revolution and commander-in-chief of the picket-line.

Now Mrs. Evans was interested in the Sacco-Vanzetti defense, and was going to the trial at Dedham to watch Web Thayer and Fred Katzmann, and be horrified like everybody else. And maybe her testimony would have been important if Thayer and Katzmann had been on trial. But that time

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had not come, and would not come for five or six years.

XI

Captain John Quincy Thornwell, Jr., Cornelia's grand-nephew, oldest son of the president of the Fifth National Bank of Boston, had been an officer in Battery A, the fashionable militia organization. Tall, golden-haired, haughty, he had looked so "fetching" in his uniform that he had fetched a wife who would some day own ten percent of the electric-light industry of New England. "Captain John" was a director in his father's bank, a builder of airplanes, and of anything else which had to do with killing. In spite of a wife and three children, he went to war a whole year ahead of the rest of America; that is, he organized a volunteer training-camp for young aristocrats, and when at last America entered he went across, and in the desperate fighting in the Argonne forest disappeared from human ken.

But in the process of digging up the remains of American soldiers in France there was found a seal ring with one of the bodies. This ring was sent to Boston and mentioned in the papers, and "Captain John's" mother went to inspect and identify it. So now the family had a relic in an air-tight coffin, over which to be publicly sentimental for the glory of their country. A famous sculptor was designing a monument, and meantime there were to be parades and muffled drums and prayers and salutes—and one of the street intersections most frequented by the wealth and fashion of Boston was to be christened "John Quincy Thornwell Junior Square". All over the city and in the suburban towns they were doing this; so that future generations of tourists would walk down Jones Street, looking for the corner of Jones and Smith and would be perplexed to discover that there was no such place, but that a quite ordinary crossing with a drug-store, an undertaking parlor, a grocery and a delicatessen shop, was known as "Michael Callahan O'Grady Square".

These ceremonies were to take place on May 29th, two days before the opening of the Sacco-Vanzetti trial at Dedham; and the event was the subject of a vehement discussion between the great-aunt of the hero and his cousin, Elizabeth Thornwell Alvin. Unthinkable that any relative should fail to attend this ceremony! Cornelia was going, because she was always hoping to keep peace with the family; but Betty declared that she was going to attend a circus, in a last effort to trace the man with the bullet-hole in his overcoat. And when Cornelia argued that John did give his life for his country, the new generation answered, "Don't talk like a Legionnaire! He gave his life for father's bonds. I didn't want them, and I'm not going to get them, so I can't see that I owe any reverence to my military cousin".

"He is dead, Betty."

"Exactly, and we aren't helping him by parading behind his corpse. We are doing it for our own glory, and especially for the young fellows—so that when Father wants them to protect his bonds again, they'll think they are being glorious. It is vicious propaganda for militarism, and if you who call yourself a pacifist do anything to help it along it will simply mean that you're old and tired, Grannie dear!"

XII

Was it accident, or was it the playful malice of fate, that Memorial Day fell on a Monday, so that the patriots had two whole days preceding the trial of Sacco and Vanzetti to rouse the population against the Reds? On that Sunday and Monday it was estimated that at least two hundred thousand Bostonians, one-fifth of the whole population, took part in ceremonies. The Governor and the Mayor were busy all day long, making speeches at breakfasts, luncheons and banquets, with parades in between, and dedications and unveilings. Senators and Congressmen, Councilmen and District Attorneys took a double holiday, and delivered eloquent praise of the flag, and denunciations of its foes, the vicious and malicious "radicals". There was high mass in half a dozen Catholic churches, with parades of the Knights of Columbus. There were memorial services in Forest Hills cemetery, with nine hundred veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic decorating graves. There were religious services in Fenway Park, with veterans of three wars forming in Copley Square, and loud-speakers installed so that huge throngs might hear. The Park Street Methodist Episcopal Church unveiled a tablet, with names of the members who had given their lives in the World War. The Elks paraded, and had a bugler sounding taps. The oldest veterans, too feeble even to put wreaths on graves,

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were taken in launches to strew flowers on the bay in honor of the unknown dead.

All over the Commonwealth the same thing went on; no community too small to have its heroes and its memories. Flag-poles were set up and monuments unveiled. Quincy, the largest town in Norfolk county, from which the Sacco-Vanzetti jury was to be drawn, dedicated three squares to its dead. One man had been killed in the Spanish war, another in an uprising in the Philippines; many years they had spent in the land of the shades without distinction, but now they were called up—on the day before two anarchist bandits went to trial! The first Quincy boy killed in the Civil War was resurrected for honors—sixty years he had been forgotten! In Bridgewater, scene of the crime for which Vanzetti was in prison, the remains of a World War veteran brought back from France were buried with solemn ceremonials; in Braintree, scene of the second crime, another body was buried, with the whole population in attendance—a parade, and speeches by the mayor, with the selectmen and other great persons standing by with bared heads. Another in Quincy, another in Weymouth—with banners furled, and muffled drums, and soldiers firing a salute over the grave.

A storm of patriotic fervor, a torrent of eloquence, in support of America, and in denunciation of her foes; hundreds of thousands of patient people, standing reverently in the spring sunshine; millions of the same kind reading about it in editions of a dozen great newspapers; and only one circumstance to mar the perfection of the double holiday—the fact that the papers were obliged to print details of several scandals then in the midst of exploding with a frightful stink. The attorney general of the Commonwealth had just filed charges against the district attorney of Middlesex County, just across the river from Boston, charging him with having blackmailed a group of leading moving-picture producers of something over a hundred thousand dollars, the price of immunity for a "Nero's Circus" which they had held in a road-house. The papers were full of lurid details about naked girls dancing the highland fling.

Also the state bank commissioner was digging into the matter of the bribery of legislators revealed by the recent bank failures; and it was an embarrassing fact that many patriotic orators of this double holiday had been sharing in such graft. The public did not know it, but the orators knew it, so they pounded the rostrum, and waved their arms until their faces grew purple and the sweat dissolved the starch in their collars; the loud-speakers bellowed, and the parks and public places, the churches and temples and banquet-halls resounded with sentiments of seraphic idealism, voiced by persons whose social functions were those of hogs in a trough.

XIII

It was not so bad at the ceremony which Cornelia attended; because that was Thornwell, and you may be sure the clan saw to it that no person tainted with scandal did any orating at John Quincy Thornwell Junior Square. The clan knew—for were they not the paymasters? The Mayor of the city happened to be a blue-blood that year—a rare interval of respectability. And if the chief magistrate of the Commonwealth was to go directly from the governor's chair to the vice-presidency of one of Rupert's banks, and soon after having appointed two of Rupert's very good friends to the supreme judicial bench—well, that was a scandal of such colossal proportions that it became respectable. Men could not face the implication of it, so it was not discussed except by a few insiders and members of the rival banking group, who knew what Rupert was after.

A grand-stand had been built, and flags and bunting turned the consecrated square into a child's dream of peppermint candy. Lines of ropes and policemen kept the throngs back; and there came "Captain John's" own Battery A, with rumble of guns and tramp of horses. There came a hundred Grand Army veterans, pitiful old boys in every stage of decrepitude, carrying their tattered battle-flags, wearing their faded blue uniforms, covered with medals and decorations. There came khaki-clad veterans of American Legion posts, and the Boy Cadets, their faces newly washed and shining. There came automobiles full of great personages in braided broadcloth suits and shiny top-hats, and ladies in costly chiffons and new spring bonnets.

A beautiful show; with rolling of drums and blowing of bugles, and standing up and sitting down, and baring heads and bowing them, while the rector of Trinity Church in the City of Boston offered an invocation

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to the God of Battles, and His Son, the Prince of Peace. War and Peace were thus mixed up in the ceremony, so that nobody could tell at any moment which was which. The orators declared that the way to insure peace was to prepare for war; upon which program the nations had just led themselves into the greatest war to end war in all history, and now were spending several times as much money to prepare for an even greater war to end war.

It would be safe to say that in that vast throng of cheering and singing and reverently listening people, these traitor-thoughts found lodgment in only one head, that of the little old lady who sat in the front row, among the highest of the high-up dignitaries. She, the widow of a former governor, a Thornwell and the great-aunt of the hero, could not have been denied her proper place without making a scandal and emphasizing the dreadful rumors that she had been seduced by the enemy, and turned into friend of bomb-throwers and bandits. So nice to look upon, with her hair now almost white, and her little round face much wrinkled but still jolly, and her new spring costume selected and presented by her daughter Alice of impeccable taste; so gentle in manner, so quiet and lady-like—it was impossible to believe what everybody knew about her, that she was actually going down to Dedham the next day to face all the uproar and notoriety, and lend her sanction to the defense of desperate anarchists on trial for their lives.

She watched with tears in her eyes while her great-grandniece, the little daughter of the dead hero, came forward to draw the veil from the bronze tablet. The bugles blew, the audience rose and bared its head, the bands started to play "America", and everybody sang—a sublime moment. The lovely young widow of the hero had to hide her face in her hands, and even the stolid James Scatterbridge and the cynical Henry Cabot Winters and the stately Rupert Alvin were not ashamed to be moved. Cornelia's tears were right and proper, and she kept her traitor-thoughts to herself.

No one guessed that she was weeping for other heroes who were still to die. For the little boys in their khaki uniforms, lifting their shining faces to the orators and the beautiful waving flags! For the mothers who brought them there, to be consecrated and pledged to future slaughters! For the great humble masses who packed the streets in every direction, and stood bare-headed and trusting, gazing up to the great ones, and believing every word the loud-speakers told them!

A sharp division in that audience, between the many who believed, and the few who knew. To the former the name America, and its symbol, the flag, meant liberty and justice for all mankind; while to the few it meant private property in land, machinery and credit, and the exploitation of labor based thereon. By means of this system, the knowing ones had brought the lesser nations and weaker peoples into debt to them; so America and the flag meant battle-ships and guns and airplanes and poison-gas to collect this tribute to all eternity. That was the reason these busy gentlemen took two days off from business, and built stands and tacked up decorations, and set up loud-speakers to carry the words of politicians and priests and preachers to crowds in the public squares. That was why you heard no patriotic address which failed to mention the "enemy within our gates", the vicious and criminal "Reds" who refused to love America and appreciate her ideals, but wanted to overthrow the greatest government in the world, and repudiate all the debts, and nationalize all the women, and make America a vassal of what the orators called the "Bolshevikis", or sometimes, like Judge Webster Thayer, the "Arnychists".

(To be continued next month)

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IN BRIEF REVIEW

EARNEST ELMO CALKINS'S *Business The Civilizer* (Little, Brown, $3.00) is a volume which somehow brings back a memory of "Thrift" by Samuel Smiler, once the best kind of a best seller. It scintillates with the iridescent inspiration of an accomplished advertising agent, to whom all things that can be sold are civilizing agents. Mr. Calkins chants the praise of business and points with just pride to the growth. There were times in the world's history when trade was none too respectable. It was hard to be a gentleman and file out goods, while to sell them over the counter was of a degree above a pack-peddler. The wholesale merchant had a status, the manufacturer also. He was a "master" to be looked up to, but not much of a civilizer. The cotton weavers were more interested in selling breech-cloths to the heathen than in treating their operators decently. Mr. Calkins is, however, dealing with the moderns. These are sons of Midas, magnificent, wonderful. They fix fashions, and alas, change them with fearful frequency.

Mr. Calkins sees things in terms of advertising. He cannot understand the wisdom of a newspaper that rejects puffs in the interest of paid advertisements and falls for yards of unrequited speech from press-agents. He does not seem to appreciate the comprehensiveness of the fig-leaf as a garment.

In his ecstasies Mr. Calkins would have the "eternal job" of administering this uneasy planet turned over to the business man, to do the things at which "religion, government and war" have failed. But do we want everything done right and well? Would not smooth going and efficiency lead to a desert-like monotony? Must we all forego whiskers that razor grinders and soap boilers may prosper? Need it be that mush and milk must totally disappear that Battle Creek may thrive? Shall all furniture become of the Grand Rapids brand in the interest of advertisers? Shall all soup come from the can to the banishment of the pot-au-feu? Are the American Telegraph and Telephone and the General Electric Corporation better governed than the United States—for the United States? Is it better that an "ad" writer should be paid a bigger salary than the President, or out-earn the most accomplished men of letters? Mr. Calkins thinks so.

The True Adventure of Christopher Columbus, by Marius André (Knopf, $4.00), is a re-estimation of the character of Columbus, the man who for many centuries has been considered the martyred victim of persons too unsympathetic, too stupid, or too crafty to aid him in his glorious designs to conquer a new world. M. André has discarded all the "definitive" accounts of the life of Columbus and of his voyages, and has constructed his biography from contemporary sources, many of them heretofore unknown. He portrays the school-book hero of America as an unscrupulous, uneducated adventurer, intent on gold and power, ignorant of the laws of navigation, unversed in science—a deranged man who placed all his faith in fantastic volumes of exploration which were classified as pure fable even in 1792, and on the Bible, which he firmly believed prophesied his coming as the second Christ. To offset these disqualifications and delusions of grandeur, Columbus was possessed of an imagination which was his reality, brooking neither opposition to his dreams nor doubts of his purpose, and of a poetic eloquence which overcame the rational misgivings of those whose support he desired and infrequently—for he had few rational misgivings of his own—of himself. His sole armor was that of an unconquerable spirit, and with that support he discovered the vast treasure of the New World—and came perilously near destroying its treasures because they were not gold, the only prize that he could conceive as worthy of him.

With convincing clarity and lack of pretentiousness, M. André re-creates the Christopher Columbus whose whole path of life

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was one of catastrophe, engendered by his own lack of insight, moral instability, and mental befuddlement. But he brings also to light—and it is sufficient recompense for a shattered idol—a man whose glorious vision and poetic imagination could overcome his incompetence and ordinary worldly failings.

Robert Hillyer fits perfectly into the comfortable English tradition with his book of poems, *The Seventh Hill* (Viking, $1.50), and despite the fact that he writes within these shores, there is very little that is essentially American in his poetry. However, he is a good Georgian, with a voice as authentic as our voices can be when we choose to speak with the British accent. He is subtle, mature, and a little world-weary. And it is this very world-weariness that gives to his poetry an ethereal quality, a remoteness, an uneasiness about material things, and a quiet spiritual grace of bearing. Death, he constantly insists, is the only truth we can be sure of; the end is the beginning of our certainty; life is but the road to that end; love is the flower—the sunflower, perhaps, following the light—that we pick by the wayside. His poetry is concentrated and well-cut, with some profundity and much sentiment—such sentiment that it sometimes seems hardly more than triteness, that at other times descends into the sphere of the faintly sentimental. Yet Mr. Hillyer is sincere, honest about his own emotions, in spite of his "thee's" and "thou's" and other particulars of a somewhat outworn manner.

Those who remember from "Lavengro" the strange account of their production will be grateful to Edward Hale Bierstadt for his re-edition of George Borrow's *Celebrated Trials* (Payson & Clarke, two vols., $15.00). The gigantic work which Borrow sweated out under the carping direction of Sir Richard Phillips is necessarily abridged here. But Mr. Bierstadt has selected from the four hundred odd cases at his disposal thirty-three which are hardly to be surpassed for interest in the history of criminal jurisprudence. Indeed, his task of selection accomplished, Mr. Bierstadt's editorial labors were nearly at an end, for Borrow's work had a competence and vigor upon which it would be folly to attempt to improve. He worked from the original records, and the direct evidence as presented at the trials is far more valuable than any editorial comment.

As one might expect, murder is the chief preoccupation of the book, but it is murder of a magnificent and historic kind: Mary, Queen of Scots, tried for conspiring in the death of Elizabeth; Francis Ravaillac, for the murder of Henry IV; and the beautiful Countess of Somerset, accused of poisoning Sir Thomas Overbury. Sir Walter Raleigh presents his gallant and witty defence against the charge of treason, and those two great eighteenth century rogues, Jack Sheppard and Jonathan Wild, are finally brought to justice in the matter of burglary and receiving stolen goods. Of a more curious order are the proceedings against the maniac, John Bellingham, and the activities of Matthew Hopkins, the Witch Finder, but they are, with the rest of the material in the collection, eminently worthy of preservation.

Captain B. H. Liddell Hart has selected for analysis in *Great Captains Unveiled* (Little, Brown, $3.50) the careers of six of the most illustrious soldiers in military history. His choice includes Jenghiz Khan and his general, Sabutai, whom Captain Hart finds equalled for strategic ability only by Napoleon; Marshal Saxe overshadowed by his contemporary, Frederick the Great; and Gustavus Adolphus. Perhaps the most interesting study in Captain Hart's collection is that of Wallenstein, the father of grand strategy and the "supreme poker player of military history", who met and matched wits with Gustavus Adolphus at Lutzen. The last chapter is devoted to the brilliant, meteoric career of General Wolfe.

Captain Hart is a realist. He is concerned with war as an art, played by a great mind like a game of chess upon a board, with victory falling to the general who maintains the advantage of position and the greater number of pieces in play. War in any broader sense—as an adjunct of political or economic history, or as a phase in the growth of an historic idea—has no place in the work of Captain Hart. But within the field he

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defined for himself, his work is lucid, impartial, informative.

In *Reputations Ten Years After* (Little, Brown, $3.00), Captain Hart has tried to achieve the closest possible reconciliation between the advantage of contemporary experience and the evidence of documentary records now available to throw light on the critical actions of the World War. He has constructed a portrait gallery of the principal commanders: Joffre, Galieni, Petain, Foch, Haig, Allenby, Falkenhayn, Ludendorff, Liggett, and Pershing. He has traced the career of each general, considered minutely the fitness of his preparation for high command, and estimated his conduct in the administration of his trust. This book is a hastier bit of work than its predecessor, and neither so important nor so interesting. Its greatest value lies in Captain Hart's analysis of the principles of strategy applied to the conduct of the World War.

When a poet of Rabindranath Tagore's ability publishes a book of poems we expect fine things. But in his *Fireflies* (Macmillan, $2.50), our hopes are not entirely realized. Although the two and three-line poems, of which this volume is comprised, are excellent in their way, Tagore has more substantial gifts to bestow on the world. We do not agree with him when he says:

"My words that are slight
may lightly dance upon time's waves
when my works heavy with import have
gone down".

These poems were written by the poet on fans or on pieces of silk for his admirers. In them he sings his praise of love and nature in images of infinite delicacy, and expresses his philosophy in quotable lines: "The greed for fruit misses the flower",

"The sectarian thinks
that he has the sea
ladled into his private pond".

As a piece of artistic craftsmanship, the book is a joy to any book lover, and in the decorations by Boris Artzybasheff is a delicacy peculiar to the East.

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In *My People the Sioux* (Houghton Mifflin, $4.00) Luther Standing Bear, Chief of the Oglala tribe of the Sioux nation, tells the varied story of his life. Educated at Carlisle, he worked for John Wanamaker, taught an Indian school, travelled with Buffalo Bill, played on the legitimate stage and and in motion-pictures, and finally returned to his tribe to be elected its chief. In this account of his life there are descriptions of Indian customs, manners, and methods of living which are as authoritative as any to be obtained from persons whose civilization has been vitiated by the white man among them. There is nothing in the book which, from the point of interest or value, is not worthy of publication; but the volume is so thoughtlessly conglomerate in arrangement that little of the material can carry the full impact of its meaning. If it had been properly co-ordinated, it might easily have been one of the most interesting biographies and source-books on Indian modes of life. In its present form readers will find it so badly transgressing accepted literary usages that much of the originality and pertinence of the context will be disregarded or overlooked.

George Dilnot possesses at least two qualities that should endear him to the reader of books on crime. He is always interesting, and he is always, at least so far as I have been able to check him, accurate. He is not always thorough, and one is sometimes left wishing that he had taken the time to dig a little deeper, but that is another matter. *In Great Detectives and Their Methods* (Houghton Mifflin, $4.00), Mr. Dilnot has covered considerable ground, but he has not penetrated below the soil. Doubtless this was his intention. The cases, rather than the methods, of a number of investigators are given, and there is a deal of casual material, all of which is entertaining. Mr. Dilnot knows his subject, and writes well on it. If he would only write less, and write more thoroughly, I believe that he would be one of the best men in his field. His book of Scotland Yard set a criterion for his later work that, I fear, it will be demanded he live up to.

Five Murders, by Edmund Pearson (Doubleday, Doran, $2.50), contains interesting material, written in the brisk, lucid manner of Mr. Pearson's other books. Of the five murders, four are worth having; the other, the murder of Rice by Patrick, has been done equally well by Mr. Arthur Train. The book also contains a postscript on the Borden case. Mr. Pearson's research is excellent, and he knows how to tell a good story. It must be said, however, that his opinions intrude far too often on the narrative. Mr. Pearson's ideas on criminology and penology belong to the dark ages. They are not simply old fashioned; they are antediluvian. When he is content simply to tell his story, Mr. Pearson has no peer in this country, at least when it comes to a good murder; but the dogmatic vehemence of the expression of his belief in capital punishment, and his disbelief in all forms of modern psychology continue to mar his work.

Elizabeth Banks is an American who went to England as a young girl, and became a successful British journalist. She returned to America from time to time as a press correspondent—but she looked at the American scene through English eyes. During the period of our neutral indecision she came to regret her citizenship. *The Remaking of an American* (Doubleday, Doran, $5.00) is the story of her repatriation, and of the observations and experiences which led her to become an American citizen, not by accident of birth, but by deliberate and reflective choice. Although her book is too personal a record to represent an adequate answer to our English critics, Miss Banks has at least been fair in giving both sides of the picture. She writes in a somewhat journalistic, anecdotal manner, but clearly and logically, with a painstaking regard for accuracy and a nice sense of the dramatic value of her material.

The most striking feature of *The Memoirs of La Grande Mademoiselle* (Century, $3.00) is the skill with which the translation has been made. Mademoiselle herself does not shine as an autobiographer. She writes with indolence, with self-complacency and some shrewd touches of wit. But her story

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conceals neither her absurdities nor her strange mingling of generosity with an extraordinary vanity. She remained all her life a child, delighting to be cast in the rôle of "Petite fille de la France", a title she merited by her devotion to the interests of the people, her kindness of heart, her liberality and justice. She was played upon by her royal relatives, Anne of Austria, Orleans, her detestable father, and finally, the Duchesse de Montespan, who made the atrocious bargain of a fortune for her illegitimate son in return for the freedom from prison of Mademoiselle's lover, Duc de Lauzun. The sole satisfactory incident in Mademoiselle's relation with de Lauzun is her final disillusionment.

H. Ashton-Wolfe has the unhappy faculty of making truth sound like fiction. *Warped in the Making* (Houghton Mifflin, $3.50) has several excellent stories of crime, and one, at least, that is superb, "The Murder of Don Ramon." This last is a classic, one of the most remarkable accounts in criminal records. Several other of his tales are definitely interesting. The author's style, however, is so florid that one's credulity is constantly strained. Mr. Ashton-Wolfe has gilded the lily until the natural flower has almost been lost sight of. "The Suicide Room" is a marvelous yarn, almost worthy to stand beside Don Ramon, but when the author has done with it, one is in doubt as to whether Hanoi Shan is a copy of Dr. Fu Manchu or whether the insidious doctor is the copy. If Ashton-Wolfe could write as well as Edmund Pearson his book would have been sensational.

Robert M. MacDonald was a wandering prospector in the Australian and New Guinea mineral fields. *Opals and Gold* (Lippincott, $4.00), is the adventurous account of those irresponsible wanderings. No matter how rich the strike in one quarter of Queensland, it could never compete with the reports from other fields; molybdenite near Chilligoe gave way to opals in New South Wales, and the opals in turn were supplanted by the alluvial gold of New Guinea. A brief sojourn with the pearl-divers near Broome convinced Mr. MacDonald that his vocation was terrestrial, after trying for a time the method of gold mining known as "dry-blowing". The motley company was drawn off to the north by a rich silver lead discovery and straight across the richest sapphire bed of the century. There is a profusion of novel material in the book which Mr. MacDonald has put together in a simple, straightforward fashion. If the book has a major fault it arises from the author's too-close association with his subject. He has not been able to select with accuracy the particular aspects of his narrative calculated to appeal to the lay-reader, and has sacrificed the total effect of his book to small flaws of proportion.

Michael Monahan's *My Jeanne d'Arc* (Century, $3.00) may be called a biographical rhapsody, mingling the elements of the supernatural with the actual. Monahan has no intention of fencing off his faerie spectacle from the sober circle of lookers-on. They are invited to enter in and mix with the crowd of spirits who dwell in the soul of the inspired Maid. But is it in this twentieth century that we are asked to believe that "the noble heart of the Maid, unconsumed by the fire that destroyed her, was taken by an angel who descended in a flashing ray of sunlight and by him was transmuted into a glorious ruby, to be placed in the eternal treasury of God!"

The Mussolini presented by Vittorio E. de Fiori in *Mussolini, The Man of Destiny* (Dutton, $3.00), is a figure already legendary. The anecdotes of his youth are crystallized and prophetic; those of his maturity are hacked and chiseled into a conventional, incredible, Titanic mould. Mr. de Fiori was personally associated with Mussolini when the future Great Man of Italy was a struggling, half-starved, Radical journalist, haranguing his friends in taverns and hiding from the police. But the color of reality and the flavor of intimacy are alike absent from de Fiori's account.

Mr. de Fiori works hard to justify to the American public both Mussolini's policies and his methods. Whenever possible he suppresses or slides over a painful actuality.

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When an ugly fact cannot be concealed, he presents it in a highly colored manner calculated to win a sentimental, if not a rational, approval from his reader. Although it is naturally not without the interest which inheres in its subject, "Mussolini, The Man of Destiny" is nevertheless too obviously partizan to merit serious consideration.

With the publication of *The Temptation of Anthony* (Boni & Liveright, $2.00), Isidor Schneider emerges from the forest of obscure literary figures, as a poet of great power. The first name that comes to mind in connection with Mr. Schneider's work is Robinson Jeffers, Colossus of California, of whose power, rhythms and magnificence of speech the newer poet's work is reminiscent. Without disparagement, Mr. Schneider's work may be said to belong—by virtue of its original inspiration and power, its unflagging grandeur of language, its tragic images—in that realm of pity and terror and overwhelming excitement presented to the literary world a few years ago, with the publication of Robinson Jeffers's "Roan Stallion, Tamar, And Other Poems".

In the poem that gives title to Mr. Schneider's volume, a poem of seventy pages in exuberant rhythms, the author reveals many facets of feeling; in it he is sensitive, modern, lusty and Elizabethan, a poet in love with gusto in language, with lucid images that shine.

> . . . They lay abed, their heads quite out of a window. Blue night, curtained with gauzes from the moon spread them a spacious chamber, and the wind, brushing banjos in the grass, ringing in the bell-lofts of the trees, played them a prothalamium.

The sentences march on and on, vibrant with freshness, rising often throughout the narrative to a climax of glittering images.

The shorter poems in the volume are distinguished by a modernity of thought and expression, though seldom achieving the high lucidity of the title-piece. In one or two, there is recognizably the influence of T. S. Eliot.

The "new biography" may be free from all illusion, but it is paradoxically not free from prejudice. G. R. Stirling Taylor's *Cromwell* (Little, Brown, $4.00) is a case in point. Mr. Taylor's prejudice seems at moments to be no more than an author's very natural preference for his own thesis —but it permeates and colors the entire work, and finally rises and engulfs it. The Cromwell Mr. Taylor gives us is a contradictory, incoherent figure. A man with an elementary love of justice and a sincere belief in his own divine inspiration, who yet contrived to find in that inspiration an excuse for every military act of violence and a reason for every mistake. A man of great, if somewhat pathological, emotional drive and of no intellectual balance. A man who could carry off the plate at Cambridge, but who could not defend such an action before the House of Commons. A man who dedicated his life to the preservation of parliamentary liberty in England, but who never once allowed the English people to elect a free parliament. A man, finally, whose actions were almost insanely forceful and violent, who was a timorous and apprehensive creature at heart. Mr. Taylor's conclusion—that Cromwell's only permanent legacy to England was a standing army—follows as well as any other upon these premises.

At fourteen years of age, Barbara Newhall Follett, the girl born with "the piratical tendency", has narrated her adventures in a vivid, unaffected book called *The Voyage of the Norman D.* (Knopf, $2.50). Going out as a cabin boy on a schooner among rough seamen, holding her own in the hard work, sharing the dangers of climbing the rigging in nasty weather, she has much to her credit. It is an infant female Roosevelt we have here.

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A SEARCHLIGHT ON MEXICO'S PAST

By Mary Austin

OF THE half-score of books worth reading which have been tossed out of the maelström of Mexican revolution, not one has the scope and the finality of *Mexico and Its Heritage,* by Ernest Gruening (Century, $5.00)—bearing in mind that "final" means, in respect to the situation as a whole, final to the hour of publication. The book is manifestly the fruit of several years residence south of the border, and yet is carefully, one might almost say cunningly, documented. Mr. Gruening, when he has anything to say unpleasing to any one of the many protagonists of Mexico's destiny, makes a point of saying it out of that protagonist's own mouth. At the same time he manages not to become simply another protagonist himself, a delicate feat in a land of so many fierce and bitter issues.

Mindful of what most Americans forget in coming to conclusions about our neighboring Republic—that it did not set out to be another United States, to be judged in the light of its failure to become just that thing—the author begins with the sharp distinction between the genesis of its settlement and ours. Mexico did not set out at all, but rather, having already arrived at a resolution of its destiny satisfactory to itself, was set upon by the most rapacious and ruthless of European monarchies. Whereas the New England settlement was accomplished by "corporations or individuals united in a common business venture", Spanish conquest was initiated under an "unshakable faith in the divinity and omnipotence of the king as the fountainhead of privilege and property".

"The Spaniards," said Herman Cortes to the first Aztec chief he met, "are troubled with a disease for which gold is a specific." Mr. Gruening shows that disease steadily eating into the fabric of Mexican life and polity, corrupting equally the Conquistador and the conquered. Especially did it get into the blood of the mixed population, creoles, Mexicans born of Spanish parents, and *mestizos,* for New Spain was never colonized in the sense of being established in original settlements, but was portioned out under Kingly grants, subject to a host of impositions, taxes, duties, fees, monopolies, to the number of sixty distinct methods for extracting revenue, laid upon every person, every human activity. As in the Spain of that time, political and economic life in Mexico was characterized by every known by-product of oppression, sycophancy, simony, cruelty and crime. This traditional character of the ruling class in Mexico was in no way genetically sprung from its Indian substratum, but was compounded of pure Spanish and the scantily legitimatized result for the conditions which obtained throughout the period of colonization, in which the Conquistadores brought few women of their own and of the aborigines took as many as pleased them. Thus to the poison of official corruption the ruling classes of Mexico added the conflicts of hybridization, and to native paganism a medievalism more limiting than indigenous savagery. Overlaid by this deliquescent slime of improbity the aboriginal populations of Mexico underwent inevitable deterioration. That they were originally dissociate, even antagonistic, not in every case geographically related; that their cultures varied greatly, though fundamentally unified by ethnic traits, Mr. Gruening is at pains to show. And following that, he has the integrity not to pretend to have disentangled the essential Indian-ness upon which a confident prediction of their future could be

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made. Here and there, where the special subject under consideration requires it, he is able to show their deep religiosity, their lack of acquisitiveness, their essential free-mindedness in the midst of binding communism.

Perhaps the best service he does to present phases of conscious recovery, is in showing how the native tribes found sanctuary for their religious oppression under the skirts of the Catholic Church, at that time in its most inquisitional stage. Finding in the high Christian character of the earliest missionaries to Mexico the only relief from the cruelty and contempt of the equally Catholic politicians, the natives did not so much renounce their paganism as gather their gods more intimately to their hearts and flee with them to the covert of the Church, worshipping their ancient ideographic divinities under the semblances of Saints and Blessed Personages. This is the item least taken into account in the present effort of the Mexican people to reduce the Church to what seems to them its appropriate place in their polity. In assuming another attitude toward it, modern Mexico is at the same time assuming a more enlightened relation to much of its hoary paganism. It is in dealing with the recent manifestations of Church and State antagonism that Mr. Gruening's method of refuting the protagonists out of their own mouths is most telling. From the things the Church itself is quoted as admitting, it appears that Mexico has simply been going through what Europe went through three and four centuries ago, neither Church nor State having learned very much in the meantime of the inevitability and method of such partition. Mr. Gruening's treatment of the religious situation leaves him free to note that many clergy were also on the side of the people, as in Luther's day, although no Mexican Luther has yet appeared.

Unless the reader has already realized that the native peoples of Mexico were never any more conquered than a man who has been first banged over the head and then kicked in the stomach until insensible can be said to have surrendered, he is likely to be put out of countenance by Mr. Gruening's handling of the political history of Mexico. His revelations of the part played by the United States in the person of its Ambassador in the Huerta incident will make troublous reading for those Americans who insist on thinking that all Mexico wants is to be like US. But if George F. Babbitt does not find what he expected in that account, he will at least have provided himself with an excellent explanation for the disappearance of the *mestizo* class from Mexican politics. They seem to have been occupied chiefly in standing each other against walls for rifle practice.

Whether Mr. Gruening gave up attempting to translate the Mexican feeling for land values into the language of the United States, as being likely to confuse the issue, or whether he found it untranslatable, at least he does not fail to note its primary importance. On the one side there are a thousand years of evaluating land as a matter of tribal *relation*, and on the other twice that time of holding land as commodity. Between the two there are unthinkable differences of approach. Even after all the facts are laid out explicitly as Mr. Gruening does it, the item that might, if understood, point the way that Mexico will take in the disposition of national domain and natural resources escapes the reader habituated to think of land as readily subject to bargain and sale, as is any other human resource. It might make a difference though, in our attitude toward Russia and our expectation about it, if we clearly understood what land means to an essentially communistic civilization.

Mr. Gruening finds two things hopeful in Mexico; the movement of organized labor, and Mexican artistry. To anyone at all familiar with the civilization that Spain destroyed, the explosive release of national

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energy in those activities which, taken together, go by the name of Art, was to have been expected. All peoples, save only those who have altered the emphasis of value in activity from expressiveness to profits, have produced art naturally and with very little convention of technique. The miracle is not that Mexican youngsters in their twenties are able to paint world-arresting murals on the façades of public buildings, but that our particular culture should have achieved a method of inhibiting similar activity in our own youth. On the other hand, this sudden irruption of aesthetic expressiveness is more nearly related to the success of the labor movement in Mexico than the author of "Mexico and Its Heritage" realizes. Wage-labor is the only new social pattern which Europe has succeeded in imposing on Mexico. It was so imperfectly established in pre-conquest times that it had not yet become ritualized, as had almost every other human activity. Although, as Mr. Gruening himself suggests, the modern ritual of unionism, strikes, lock-outs, standardizations and reprisals is often clumsy and not infrequently absurd, it nevertheless proceeds through the medium of minds long habituated to ritualistic patterning. It may well be that just because wage-labor is a comparatively new economic device, the people are better able to deal with it successfully than with older civic and political complexes.

On the whole, though this book makes us realize that Mexico is still sick with its three hundred years of political oppression and social frustration, it manages to quicken both interest and expectation far beyond anything that has yet appeared on the subject.

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CONRAD'S LETTERS TO EDWARD GARNETT

By Robert Littell

IT was Mr. Edward Garnett who, as literary adviser to Unwin's, first read "Almayer's Folly", and thereby discovered Joseph Conrad. The conquest of this splendid continent was much more difficult than the discovery; it was prolonged over a period of twenty-nine years, and was never really completed. Almost up to the end of his life, Conrad poured his manuscripts and rough drafts, his dark doubts and gnawing discouragements, upon Mr. Garnett; and with each new story Mr. Garnett was faced with the problem of persuading Conrad that it was good, that he was meant to write stories, and should by all means go on doing so. What kind of letters Mr. Garnett wrote back to Conrad can only be guessed at, but, judging from the immense thankfulness and ever-growing affection of Conrad's answers, they must certainly have been the most intelligently warm-hearted letters ever sent to an author by his private critic.

Mr. Garnett, with an extreme modesty which, if only Ford Madox Ford had commanded a fraction of it, would have saved us from one of the silliest eclipses of a great man by a small one on record, suppresses from this correspondence all his own letters, all but the briefest explanatory footnotes, and speaks directly only in an introduction as moving as it is businesslike. But every page of Conrad's tells us that the man he was writing to was quite as much a genius in his own way as Conrad was in his.

The *Letters from Joseph Conrad, 1895-1924* (Bobbs-Merrill, $3.50), are almost wholly concerned with shop. They form a fairly complete history of Conrad's dealings with various publishers and magazines, the prices he received for his books, and the process of writing the books themselves. The various publishers and editors appear and reappear, very briefly, but Conrad's penetrating eye for the characteristic traits of human animals make them as alive as if he were trying to put them into a novel. And those letters in which Conrad describes the details of his negotiations with them are novels of common-sense and skilful manœuvering.

The important part of this record is, of course, what we learn about the growth of each novel, what Conrad thought of it while it was coming out of his mind, and the state of that mind, usually depressed and self-mistrustful and often bordering upon tragic despair. "I go about oppressed, severely irritated against my works, never free from it, never satisfied with it . . . The world is one big grey shadow and I am one immense yawn . . . I am ready to cut, slash, erase, destroy; spit, trample, jump, wipe my feet on that MS at a word from you . . . To be able to think and unable to express is a fine torture . . . The *Outcast* is a heap of sand, the *Nigger* a splash of water, *Jim* a lump of clay . . . Upon my word I hate every line I write . . ."

Mr. Garnett warns us not to take "his cries of distress . . . either too absolutely or too lightly". Even though Conrad meant what he said, there was consolation as well as despair in his self-depreciation. We can be sure too that every one of his ghastly struggles with inward darkness and paralysis received the tonic of Mr. Garnett's encouragement and faith. Yet the agony that went into the making of "The Return" and "The Rescue" was such that only a heart of steel could recover from it and ever face again the blank pages of a new beginning.

At very rare intervals Conrad is shyly pleased with his work, or with a small chapter of it, and asks Mr. Garnett to confirm his weak-kneed hopes. Even more rarely, he is so sure of himself that he does not lean upon Mr. Garnett at all. "The *Secret Sharer*, between you and me, is *it*. Eh? No damned tricks with girls there. Eh? Every

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word fits and there's not a single uncertain note. Luck, my boy. Pure luck."

There is already one vast collected edition of Conrad, but there will be others. May one of them include, at the end of each volume, excerpts from these letters showing how it grew, and what he thought of it. Long pages of triumph over strange men and far places, and then the terribly honest, writhing little footnotes of despair and doubt.

Though this reflection of his own feelings about his work runs through the letters like a taut thread, and makes the book one of the most interesting literary documents that exists, there is much else that makes it extremely entertaining as well. Each letter is, in a way, the free explosion of a wound-up spring, each letter is release into easy, molten words of the strength which at his desk was so often a silent and unhappy prisoner. "I am proud," says Conrad, "of my powers of stately invective combined with the art of putting the finger to the nose." This was apropos of a fiery article Conrad had contributed to a discussion of the official censor of the English stage. An equally blistering, if not always stately invective bursts out repeatedly in the letters. "As to faking a 'sunny' ending to my story I would see all the American Magazines and all the American Editors damned in heaps before lifting my pen for that task. On the subject of critics he is so keenly destructive as to leave even the thickest skinned of that fluent craft palsied with incurable melancholia. He rips them open, and then rubs the poison of their own tired adjectives into the wound. "Touching, tender, noble, moving . . . Let us spit!"

Other bits that stick in one's memory include an appearance of Ford Madox Ford so early in their common history that the final "Ford" was still "Hueffer". "Why didn't you come? I expected you and fate has sent Hueffer. Let this be written on my tombstone." And a brief reference to Shaw. "G. B. S. towed by Wells came to see me reluctantly and I nearly bit him." And recurring instances of his ancestral antipathy for Russia, called forth by the receipt, at frequent intervals, of copies of Mrs. Garnett's translations. Turgenev—the least Russian of them all—he admires immensely. Of "Anna Karénina" he "thinks but little". "The Brothers Karamazov" is "an impossible lump of valuable matter . . . fierce mouthings from prehistoric ages . . . too Russian for me". By the time Mrs. Garnett has reached Chehov, in 1922, Conrad has little left to say about the Russians. "He is too delightful for words. Very great work. Very great."

Nor can one forget this, when he sailed for America in 1923: "That I should want a ticket in order to go on board a ship on a foreign voyage seems to me the most absurd thing in the world". Nor that immensely shrewd and exhaustive critique of Mr. Garnett's play "The Breaking Point". Nor the ringing, melancholy, unsentimental account of his own father and mother. Nor Heinemann's objection to the "bloody's" in the "Nigger of the Narcissus". "That Israelite is afraid of women . . . I struck 3 or 4 *bloody's* out. I am sure there is a couple left yet, but, damn it, I am not going to hunt 'em up." Nor how he sent little David Garnett several volumes of Cooper. The next thing we know—though years have passed—he is congratulating the author of "Lady into Fox".

And then there are great slashes of iron and magnificent beauty which strike like sudden lightning over the troubled, rolling landscape of the letters. At Ile Grande: "Only a few old fellows forgotten by the capricious death that dwells upon the sea . . ." Upon the death of Eustace Hartley, a friend of the Garnetts: "Wisdom says: do not fill the vacated place—never: This is the only way to a life with phantoms who never perish; who never abandon one; who are always near and depart only when it is time also for yourself to go. I can tell for I have lived during many days with the faithful dead".

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FICTION NOTES

THE run of adolescent novels seems destined to flow on forever, and Charles Wertenbaker, in *Boojum* (Boni & Liveright, $2.00), presents his version. Nowhere does he take his subject too seriously; the book contains the usual amount of drinking, swearing and loving, but it omits that overdose of youthful philosophy so familiar in most novels of this sort. And it has quiet laughter behind the depiction of Stuart Lee Breckenbridge, alias "Boojum", a boy who calls himself a poet.

The temptation to ransack the shelves whereon lie the heroes of literature, and the heroes embalmed in literature is one which should be denied. Nevertheless, Vincent Starrett, in *Seaports in the Moon* (Doubleday, Doran, $2.50), has taken from the shelves and dusted off with a sort of Erskinish touch a group of men exceedingly well-favored by time: Columbus, Villon, Rabelais, Ponce de Leon, Edgar Allan Poe, Don Quixote, and a half dozen other heroes. Mr. Starrett himself labels the resulting series of stories and sketches a "phantasia". The incidents related are largely fictional, and are held together, as far as chronological sequence is concerned, by a vial of water from the Fountain of Youth. After passing through the hands of several of our heroes, and after touching the lives of all of them, it comes into the hands of a Philadelphia bookseller. The Philadelphia bookseller does not want the vial and its youth-conferring liquid to fall into the hands of a wealthy moron who is about to purchase it—so he pours the water from the Fountain of Youth into the goldfish bowl.

Ashenden, or The British Agent, by Somerset Maugham (Doubleday, Doran, $2.50), is an urbane series of stories dealing with the diplomatic side of Secret Service work. Mr. Maugham cannot quite bring himself to forget human nature even in a potboiler, and he has dotted the book with passages reminiscent of his best work. Ashenden himself is the tool for Maugham's story telling, but Guillia Lazzari, the dancer-prostitute, and The Hairless Mexican with no scruples are two excellent characterizations.

Margaret Goldsmith has fallen short in an attempt to portray Germany's youth sympathetically. She writes, in *Karin's Mother* (Payson & Clarke, $2.00), of the two children of an American woman and her German husband. Unfortunately she has made the son a typical goose-step Teuton of melodrama, and the daughter all too sympathetically American. Young Germany, according to Miss Goldsmith, is either discouragingly Teutonic or hopefully American in its tendencies. She tries to bring the two elements together comprehensively, through the depiction of the mother, but does not quite succeed.

Maximilian Foster had an idea which might have been developed into an excellent novel, but in *Crooked* (Lippincott, $2.00), the idea is buried beneath shoddy language and a cheaply theatrical plot. His scene is New York and his heroine is a young woman, who mercilessly nags her husband into making more money at any cost because she cannot endure the patronage of her wealthier women friends. Eventually she drives the honest, plodding fellow to such a point of desperation that he deliberately joins a shady business concern, piles up a fortune which barely suffices to assuage the increasing greed of his wife, and then crashes swiftly and shamefully. The first part of the book is good. Mr. Foster knows how to describe the little grating tragedies of poverty, and out of Bertha's defiant purchase of a costly gown he manages to create drama. But as soon as the unhappy Charley begins to accumulate his ill-gotten and unconvincing gains, "Crooked" degenerates into the unrealities of Hollywood.

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City editors, managing editors and reporters on all newspapers throughout the country are urged to co-operate in making the contest comprehensive by sending us stories by members of their staff or stories they themselves have written, or stories that have been called to their attention.

In all cases two clippings of each story should be sent, with the date it appeared, the name of the newspaper in which it appeared, and the reporter's name plainly indicated. In cases where there has been collaboration, the name of the collaborator should also be given and the extent of his work indicated. In such cases the award will be shared by the collaborators in a manner specified by the juror.

One juror is sole arbiter for one month, another juror the next month, and so on. Stories are not to be sent to any individual juror direct, but addressed to:

Editor of THE BOOKMAN, 452 Fifth Avenue, New York City

Clippings for the month of July will now be received

THE ARBITER FOR THE MONTH OF JULY WILL BE HENRY JUSTIN SMITH

[THE JULY STORY SELECTED WILL APPEAR IN THE OCTOBER ISSUE]

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Leonard Nason's indomitable artilleryman, the hero of "Chevrons", is back in a new book, *Sergeant Eadie* (Doubleday, Doran, $2.00), which recounts adventures previous to those of the first volume. Technically a splendid piece of work, the book is good in every particular—in description, in narration, in situation, and most of all, of course, in dialogue. Only Eadie himself is disappointing—and this probably because his second appearance is distinctly an anti-climax to his first. Adventures in plenty fill the volume—Eadie's transport is torpedoed, and once in France he finds himself in frequent active battles with the Germans and the M. P.'s—but there is nothing comparable to the glorious fight on the hill or the bitter hospital episodes of "Chevrons". It may be that the Eadie of the new book is immature and undeveloped—not the Eadie that we first learned to love. The two volumes should be read in reverse order if one is to follow the real character development of this best of all fictional doughboys.

Ecola! by Jacland Marmur (Doubleday, Doran, $2.00) is a collection of three stories of the sea—not about the sea, but of it. Its author is a man who knows his ships. Of the three stories in the volume, the first is far and away the best. It tells of Captain Barnes, a first-rate sailor-man who shared his faith between his ship and his girl, and of what happened to one when he lost the other. The remaining two stories, "The Harbor Master of Ahukini", and "The Nemesis of the Rubios", are also laid in exotic scenes, and their scenery is genuine: Mr. Marmur has evidently been there. The author's quiet narrative lifts and falls in a minor key, the note of night-wind through the rigging, of the slow washing of seas along the bulwarks. If deep water has a spell over the reader, he will be captivated by these tales.

An earlier version of *Red Horses,* by Felix Riesenberg (McBride, $2.00) entitled "P. A. L." was published three years ago, and was a failure, although it received good notices. If the earlier version was anything like the present one, it is easy to understand the notices but hard to figure out the failure. The story is the rise of Pal Tangerman from dubious beginnings in Seattle to risky millionairehood in Chicago. It is Mr. Riesenberg's triumph that he conceals nothing, shows everything, and succeeds in making understandable his hero and his hero's greatness. At times the story moves on the edge of satire, and the author—he is human—cannot resist an occasional dig in our ribs; but the peculiar effectiveness of the narrative lies in its frank, almost naïve simplicity, a chronicle of quick events, of deals that are usually just legal. In the course of it one becomes aware that not puppets, but men and women, are concerned.

Margaret Prescott Montague has recaptured the folklore of the West Virginia hills in *Up Eel River* (Macmillan, $2.50)—a series of short stories dealing with the legend of Tony Beaver and the strange doings at his lumber camp on the mythical Eel River. This Tony Beaver, like his counterpart of the Northern hills, Paul Bunyan, performs miracles such as harnessing the wheels of time, and capturing tomorrow; he grows watermelons the size of a freight car; and once mounted a horse saddled toward the tail "so's you can ride both going and coming". Almost anything could happen up Eel River. Miss Montague has the knack of giving distinction and life to a difficult dialect which would undoubtedly suffer in less competent hands. As it is, every page has delightful humor, appreciation of the foibles of human nature, and distinct charm.

When reading a story of Russian life one inevitably compares it with those of the great Russian novelists, with the frequent result that it suffers out of proportion to its actual faults. *We Have Changed All That* (Bobbs-Merrill, $2.00), by Herbert Quick and Elena Stepanoff MacMahon, tells of Bolshevist rule —or misrule—in Kazan and its effect on the ancient family of Krassin, mother, son and daughter. The Russian revolution offers a vast field, scarcely touched in fiction. And yet this book fails to do it justice. The story is decorated with a wealth of local color.

(Continued on page XXX)

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The BOOK MART

SELLING books by auction is over until next winter and now the dealers who purchased books and manuscript at low prices at the end of a waning season are confronted with the problem of their disposal. The closing sales in New York were not productive, with the exception of the Sidney Colvin letters, sold by order of his literary executor, E. V. Lucas. That sale brought out some of the most interesting literary autograph material that has been seen in the auction room for a long time. It consisted of the letters written to Sir Sidney and Lady Colvin by their literary associates and friends, and these letters were often of the most personal nature. Of course, as Stevenson's literary executor, Sir Sidney had an extensive correspondence while editing the Life and Letters, and though Stevenson's own letters were disposed of long ago, so many of these related to him that they had an especial value for a Stevenson collector. Much of the material related also to Keats, and there were a hundred letters of Joseph Conrad which dealt largely with his own work. The prices which they brought were not high—the Conrad letters brought an average price of $44.30 each, and fifteen of them had been published in Jean-Aubry's volume. One lot in this sale consisted of three autograph letters from Richard Curle to Colvin on the publication of these letters, and was accompanied by a rare item for Conrad collectors, one of one hundred copies of a brochure on "The Personality of Joseph Conrad" privately printed from the Edinburgh Review of January, 1925. The brochure is of sixteen pages and is one of the most interesting things written about Conrad. Colvin had applied to Curle, as one of the executors of Conrad, for permission to print these letters. Curle, after conference with his co-executor, Sir Ralph Wedgewood, felt compelled to refuse, and wrote:

"Our great desire is to provide adequately for the family & therefore, as Aubry will have told you, we are going to bring out two volumes of letters for the benefit of the estate. We are practically all helping this project—my collection, for instance, which is one of the largest, is at Aubry's disposal.—If we allow friends to publish their letters prior to the volumes we feel that the general interest will be lessened . . . And if we give permission to one how can we refuse it to another? . . . I literally hate having to say 'No' but I feel that it is the right course. I have said 'No' to myself, so that I am quite consistent."

Later, Curle, on the urging of Hugh Walpole and Major Gordon Gardiner, did give permission to Colvin to use extracts from the letters, with safeguards. And this lot of letters and the privately printed brochure brought only three dollars at the Colvin sale! It was bargain day for somebody.

Robert Louis Stevenson's play of "Monmouth", after remaining in the obscurity of manuscript for nearly sixty years, has at last been published. Written when Stevenson was at the age of eighteen, when he had published only two pamphlets, "The Pentland Rising" and "The Charity Bazaar", it remained unknown until 1922, when it was discovered with a mass of other juvenilia. Sir Edmund Gosse, in alarm, wrote to the "Times" which announced the discovery, that he had asked Stevenson to burn the manuscript and he had suppressed it in issuing the Pentland edition of Stevenson. Sir Edmund said, "The whole question of emptying the nursery wastepaper basket of eminent authors into the public press is one which more and more loudly calls for a decision. The dead should be protected against their own carelessness". In this view Sir Sidney Colvin concurred without having read the manuscript. On the other hand Lloyd Osbourne and E. V. Lucas demurred. The manuscript passed into the hands of the late John Quinn, and was sold with his collection in March, 1924, for $1,200. Now it appears in a beautiful octavo of eighty pages, de-

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signed by Bruce Rogers and printed by William Edwin Rudge, in an edition of only two hundred and fifty copies. There will hardly be enough to go around among the Stevenson collectors, and this is entirely a collectors' book. Nobody with a grain of sense would think of judging Stevenson by this early work, which nevertheless has some splendid lines in it. It will neither add to his fame nor detract from it, but it is interesting as showing the workings of Stevenson's youthful and productive mind.

This business of making books for book collectors is well-nigh getting out of hand. The "limited edition" of "one hundred copies signed by the author" at twenty dollars a copy and the ordinary edition of five hundred copies at five dollars a copy allow the collector a choice, but there are signs that the patience of the collector of modern first editions is being worn out by this device. The signed copy simply shows that the author has handled that particular copy (and probably swore while writing his signature a hundred times in succession), but it does not make that particular copy worth fifteen dollars more than one of the trade edition, which possibly may have antedated it in the actual printing. When an edition is limited as closely as Stevenson's "Monmouth", however, its price is fixed by the immutable law of supply and demand. When the Rowfant Club of Cleveland published Kipling's piscatorial essay on "Dry-Cow Fishing" the author, in giving permission to use this article picked up from an old number of a fishing journal, stipulated that the number of copies printed should not exceed the number of members in the Rowfant Club. Even Bruce Rogers, the designer, was not allowed a copy. That is why a copy of "Dry-Cow Fishing" ranks as among the books not in the market.

Now the Rowfant Club has issued "The Format of the English Novel", by A. Edward Newton, in an edition of two hundred and eighty-nine copies, beautifully printed on all-

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rag paper in the aquatone process, by Edward Stern of Philadelphia, under Mr. Newton's personal direction. The book is illustrated with pictures of books from Mr. Newton's own library, printed, not on inserts of heavy plate paper, but directly on the rag paper with the text. The subject is interesting; Mr. Newton always writes entertainingly; the book is a beautiful one; and the edition is so small that after the club members get their copies there will not be many left for Newton collectors. In fact, this is likely to be the most desirable of the Newton books, and among Rowfant publications will rank with the Kipling.

Herschel V. Jones, the editor of the *Minneapolis Journal*, who has a reputation of being one of the great American book collectors, has had published by William Edwin Rudge a catalogue of three hundred books from his collection of some seventeen hundred Americana. These deal with the romance of discovery and exploration from Spain to Alaska, from 1492 to the last great American gold rush. The catalogue, of which only 200 have been printed for sale (at $125 each), has an introduction by Wilberforce Eames, a title page designed by Bruce Rogers and three hundred reproductions of title pages in exact facsimile. These books have been brought together within the last seven years. Many of them are the only copies known, and all are of extreme rarity. Many of these are $10,000-dollar books, and the three hundred selected represent by no means all the rarities in the Jones collection.

Mr. Jones, some forty years ago, started book collecting by buying a first edition of Browning's "The Inn Album". He gathered several hundred first editions, and then sold them to collect Dickens and Thackeray. Early English literature was then coming into fashion, so he sold the Victorians and began buying early English literature, to be sold when he had 2,000 volumes and was

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sixty years old. A little short of both limits, he sold this collection at auction at the Anderson Galleries in 1918-19 with the 1727 lots bringing a total of $381,854.60. Shortly after he began to buy Americana. The present collection, probably the most valuable yet, is the result. The catalogue is a tribute to his good judgment.

(Continued from page XXVI)

Russian mannerisms and customs are tossed in. Much is said about the inherent belief of the upper classes in the immutability of the social order *in statu quo ante bellum*. But there is displayed neither understanding of, nor sympathy for, the causes that brought about the revolution. The plot seems trite and the characters literary rather than lifelike. The villain who is utterly villainous, the other villain who turns out to have a heart of gold, the mother who will sacrifice everything, even her daughter, to save a worthless son, the daughter who flees to the man she loves—these are people we meet too often in books.

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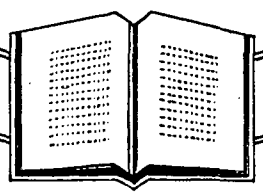

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